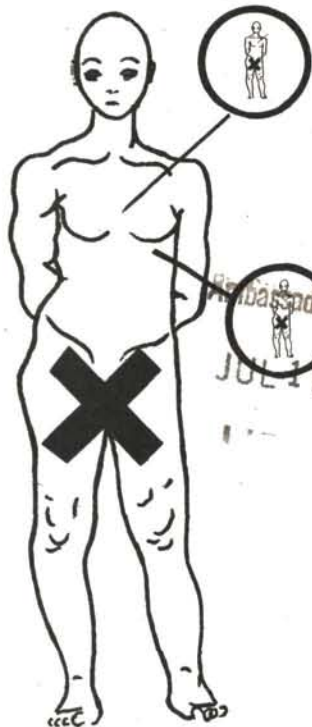


NEW STATESMAN

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Labour and the Merger Kings

The month which has just passed perhaps saw the end of what we might call the Weinstock Era of British capitalism. It may seem hard to pin a whole era onto the chieftain of the General Electric Company, but he and his supporters hardly disavowed credit when things seemed to be going better. And it is not, anyway, an argument involving dishonour. If an argument requires to be defeated at its strongest, then capitalism requires to be criticised precisely through those firms like GEC, which appear to have been directed with some intelligence, honesty and energy. The activities of market-manipulators like Jim Slater do not necessarily represent capitalism any more than the corrupt bureaucrats of Eastern Europe necessarily represent democratic socialism.

Bank Holiday-makers who penetrated to the business section of the *Sunday Telegraph* will have found a long article lamenting the condition of GEC: its domestic appliance business calamitous, its radio and television business lurching; electric cookers abandoned; the company compelled to look to a Japanese 'marriage' in order to 'draw on the sound "institutional" management which a big Japanese producer could provide'. GEC is, of course, hardly bust: it has more than £600 million in the bank, which is a lot more than the National Enterprise Board. But ideas for the deployment of this wealth do not seem to run to anything much more than looking around the United States for going concerns which might be picked up.

What a change from the days when the equivalent pages of the *Sunday Times* – which have always represented the business culture in its more self-confident mood – were rarely complete without a suggestion that what was good for the abrasive Sir Arnold was good for Britain. That section on Sunday led its pages with a story – lifted, without acknowledgement, from the *NEW STATESMAN* – to the effect that Britain's strategic investment in the new, vital

and risky business of microelectronics will be made, not by GEC, but by the National Enterprise Board, with Cabinet backing.

The commonplace account of the paralysis of private capital in Great Britain suggests that it is because rewards are too small and regulations too severe: a view which the Stock Exchange put forward in their evidence to Sir Harold Wilson's committee investigating the investment system. Mr Leif Mills of the National Union of Bank Employees, managed to disconcert the Stock Exchange by making a rather simple point. Regulation and taxation were considerably less onerous in the fifties and sixties. Yet the performance of private capital had surely not, in retrospect, been significantly better?

Along with sad reports of the disarray of GEC, and accounts of the Government's emergence – *faute de mieux*, perhaps – into the classic role of capital entrepreneurship, May 1978 saw the appearance of another vital document, namely the Consultative Document on Monopolies and Merger Policy (Cmd 7198). This draws a balance for the three decades or so in which Tory, and more remarkably, Labour, governments have assumed mergers and take-overs to be in the public interest. Centrally, it was this policy which gave us firms like GEC, whose expertise consisted chiefly in growth-by-acquisition. Bluntly, there is practically nothing to set on the credit side. The policy is shown to have given us an economy dominated by giant firms to an extent untrue in Europe or in America, with no direct evidence of increased efficiency, and much to suggest the exact opposite. The belief – held in the latter sixties by people as diverse as Tony Benn and Anthony Crosland – that capitalist mergers might improve the efficiency of British industrial management – is shown to be wholly mythological. In its fine print, the document exposes one potent cause of our misfortunes: the fact that our stock

market, in direct contrast to conventional wisdom about 'restrictions', is absurdly over-powerful and under-regulated when comparisons are made with other industrial nations.

'The banking system in Europe has traditionally played a more significant role in providing finance for investment than in the UK. Such a system in practice places a lower premium on the absolute size of a company as a determinant of the allocation of investment funds than in the British system where the Stock Market and share valuation exert a major influence' (p.48).

Or: the British system encourages the growth of purely financial entities, which lack the moral and managerial energy to tackle real industrial problems. What is surpris-

ing is that this document, for all its detailed excellence, suggests no change of public policy greater than treating prospective mergers as merely 'neutral' in terms of public interest. The rather obvious step of declaring all mergers to be against the public interest unless proved otherwise – together with a determination to start unscrambling some of them – is regarded as something the Americans might do, but not ourselves. Perhaps the relevant Minister, Mr Roy Hattersley, will be more radical than his officials: in any case, it is not enough merely to recognise that Weinstock and the merger-experts have failed us. The need is to start undoing some of the damage they have caused.

Notes on Politics and Power

'Stolen' uranium: Labour breaks a promise

Alun Roberts writes: In the last week it has been confirmed that Tony Benn as the Minister of Energy is actively if furtively defying the wishes of the UN, SWAPO, the Labour Party NEC and Labour Party conference. The guardian of the conference's conscience is also breaking a public pledge of his own. At the annual shareholders' meeting the chairman of the British owned Rio Tinto-Zinc Sir Mark Turner admitted that British Nuclear Fuels Ltd has received deliveries from RTZ of Namibian uranium. Although Turner would not reveal how much uranium had been delivered it is certain that the vast bulk of the 7,500 ton contract has yet to be sent to supply Britain's nuclear power programme. ASLEF, the train drivers' union, the T&G and the National Union of Seamen will announce this week their intention to black the delivery of any further supplies, arguing that Britain effectively is receiving stolen goods from the illegally occupied Namibia. So Benn is about to take on the unions as well.

In 1970 the Labour Government originally agreed a contract with RTZ for uranium from Canada, but, under obscure circumstances, RTZ managed to transfer the contract to Namibia and to have it enlarged to 7,500 tons on the grounds that no capital finance for the whole development of the giant Rossing mine in Namibia would be made available unless the orders were sufficiently large. Soon after the contract was signed, the UN Security Council called on member states to refrain from any dealings with South Africa which would imply recognition of its authority to administer Namibia. Yet it was only by South Africa's consent that RTZ was continuing to mine in the territory. A year later the International Court of Justice also declared that South Africa's occupation was illegal. In May 1973 the Labour Party Programme, subsequently endorsed by party conference, announced Labour 'will terminate the Atomic Energy Authority Programme with RTZ'. Tony Benn in a letter to the *Guardian* in September 1973 added 'we have already decided to terminate the AEA/RTZ contract for the supply of uranium from Namibia. That particular case, in which neither RTZ or AEA were altogether candid with

the last Labour Government points to the need for even greater vigilance than has been shown in the past. As the Minister responsible at the time I certainly learned that lesson.'

All seemed set fair for Labour's cancellation of the contract especially since in September 1974 the United Nations Council for Namibia with whom the legal administration for the territory lay, decreed that 'no person or entity may search for, prospect for, extract, mine, process, export or sell any natural resources of Namibia.' Any transportation found carrying Namibia's natural resources could be seized on behalf of the UN. But Tony Benn has not cancelled the contract, even though there is an escape clause in the contract to allow the Government to do so. Other countries have extricated themselves from Namibia. The Japanese firm Mitsubishi have decided to hold their 8,500 ton contract with Rossing.

Lord Lovell Davies explained the Government's position in October 1975 quite simply. HMG first did 'not recognise the UN decree as having any legal effect and second, any succession state in Namibia would, we think start with a distinct advantage on the basis of arrangements such as those obtaining between Namibia and UK companies already firmly in position and capable of extension by mutual agreement.' Yet last week RTZ promised that no compensation would be paid to any future independent Namibian government. SWAPO replied to Britain's pretensions of

altruism two years ago: 'The British Government contract ensures the short-term economic viability of Rossing and provides South Africa with vested interests in maintaining an illegal occupation of our country'.

Without the British contract the Rossing mine would probably close, and with it South Africa's main source of nuclear weaponry. For although Rossing have promised that no uranium will be supplied to South Africa, this ignores the point that RTZ does not control the mine. South Africa provided most of the equity finance both originally and for the later extensions. Vorster has also passed the South Africa Uranium Act no 37 which gives it the right to remove any amount of uranium from Rossing for its own purposes at any time. While RTZ have the British contract the mine will remain operational and therefore open to any call South Africa will make on it.

The DoE's other explanation is that no alternative supplies of energy are available for the period required. Yet in July 1977 the Government blew their own cover by negotiating in a matter of weeks 1,000 tons of uranium from Niger. The Government's real dilemma is that such alternative supplies of uranium would cost 35-40 dollars per pound while Britain is picking a pound up for \$13 from RTZ. The cheapness, of course, is partly due to the enforced apartheid system at the mine.

To ensure supply the purchaser and producer have attempted to keep the route secret. However last month news leaked that the uranium was being flown to Orly airport, Paris via a South African Airways Boeing 707 and then transferred under special security measures to British lorries. With the new determination of the unions Mr Benn may find it harder to get Namibia's uranium, but incidentally easier to stick to his promises. (He claims to have fought the issue in Cabinet, and lost.)

The 'happy' blacks of Redbridge

Tim Albert writes: At first sight the report into the education of young West Indians in the London borough of Redbridge (NS 26 May) got an encouraging launch last week. The report had outlined a disturbing

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lack of achievement by them, and at a public meeting some 300 people, including parents, councillors, education administrators and teachers, turned up to discuss why. However, there were some discouraging signs as the generally good-tempered meeting went on. None of the mums got up to speak. Instead considerable time was taken up by teachers reacting and counter-reacting to the charge that they might be prejudiced. The councillors promised nothing but the usual platitudes. And there have been other discouraging signs. A front page article in the NUT newspaper *The Teacher* has quoted a union official as regretting 'such broad and unsubstantiated suggestions' as those made in the report about teachers' attitudes, and a local NUT secretary deplored 'the sweeping generalisations'. When I applied to visit one of the schools named in the report I was politely but firmly refused permission, because attitudes were already running too high.

Mr John Telford, chairman of the council's education committee, also offered little hope. He has told me: 'In general terms, and I mean this in the nicest possible way, the West Indian children are more interested in the creative activities, in sports . . . Do you want a hard-working, high-achieving young man or woman, or do you want to develop their present happy approach and make things up in due course?' He could give no assurances that any of the report's modest recommendations could be implemented: 'I welcome them . . . But I am concerned to ensure that the resources that are available are shared . . . It's a balancing act. We mustn't detract from others who have a rightful share.'

Meanwhile the energies of his council go into defying the Secretary of State by fighting for two grammar schools for the privileged 8 per cent of the Redbridge population. The two issues may not be unconnected: while they haggle over the ways to educate what they like to think as the future leaders at one end of the scale, the serious neglect at the other may ensure that when the time comes, there will be nothing left for them to lead.

Industrial democracy: a White Paper tiger

Paul Davies writes: The TUC's industrial democracy proposals, refined and developed by the Bullock Committee, offered the chance of a genuinely radical change in the private sector that would enable the labour movement to break out of the confines of traditional collective bargaining and establish a coherent scheme for joint regulation of the corporate plans of the economy's dominant enterprises.

If this was the goal, then it was clear that Bullock was the minimum that would be required, a minimum that probably could have been sold to a wide range of activists in the labour movement. For the Government it was soon apparent that Bullock was a maximum, insofar as it was conceived of as practical politics at all. This week has seen the long awaited anti-climax of the Industrial Democracy White Paper, the Government's formal reply to Bullock and a paper tiger which, sadly, even the



TUC seems to think has some fight in it. Of course, Bullock-style legislation could not be expected from a minority government, but this tentative document – really a Green Paper with white edges – lacks any serious commitment to the Bullock concept. Worker representation on the board has receded into the rather indefinite future. Legislation, of which there is no immediate prospect, would require in the first instance only *discussion* (outside the boardroom) of corporate plans by medium and large companies with representatives of recognised trade unions. This substantive obligation to talk, so weak in comparison with the mutual vetoes involved in parity representation on the board, is backed by sanctions against employers who will not enter into discussion or, more likely, will not disclose enough information to make discussions meaningful, that are themselves so tentative and ineffectual that there seems little reason for any employer to fear them. That such discussions take place in some companies at present is, of course, true; that these proposals will do much to encourage the spread of the practice is unlikely.

Only after three or four years of such discussion via an inter-union Joint Representation Committee would the employees acquire any rights to board-level representation. The vital elements of the Bullock scheme were equal numbers of employees and shareholders representatives on the present unitary boards (but with 'attributed functions'), the employee representatives being chosen via the 'single-channel' JRC. The White Paper, in which the Government confesses itself unable to choose among the various rationales for employee representation on the board, is suspect on all three points. Representation is now to be on the upper tier (the policy board) of a two-tier system – no bad thing in itself, but the relationship of this board to the general meeting of shareholders is not spelt out. The White Paper equivocates on the principle of the 'single channel', envisaging separate representation for 'any substantial homogeneous group' of non-unionists. Most crucial, parity is out: the maximum for employee representatives is to be one-third, something which the White Paper describes in a massive misunderstanding of the qualitative difference between parity and minority representation as 'reasonable'.

Giscard and the politics of weaponry

Joseph Fitchett writes: French socialists' criticism of Giscard D'Estaing's disarmament plan presented at the UN is that he prescribes good medicine for everyone in an arms-sick world except France. The telling points are a) on nuclear matters, the superpowers are urged to cut back their arsenals to attain an 'optimal security' level, but no mention is made of France's own deterrent, the *Force de Frappe* created by De Gaulle, and b) calling for curtailed arms sales to the Third World, the Giscard plan offers no exemplary gestures by France, the biggest arms supplier per capita of any country. The two omissions deprive Giscard's plan of credibility, socialists say.

The Giscard plan, heavily publicised in France as a historic new contribution of Gallic statesmanship, is a domestic political issue. Giscard announced his intention to broach disarmament last summer when the United Left looked sure to form a government this spring with Giscard holding the Presidency. Socialist Party leaders believe Giscard was motivated by a desire to dish the Socialists electorally and, if he failed, subsequently force some post-electoral co-operation across ideological lines from the incumbent government. In the event, the Socialists rushed through their own plan first, which so closely paralleled Giscard's that Paris political *Salons* rustled with rumours of disarmament espionage. (In fact, a large overlap was inevitable in any two disarmament plans prepared by any French parties eyeing office.) Both plans' centrepiece was the proposition that the superpowers' co-chairmanship of the Geneva disarmament talks should be replaced by a wide-open international forum – a formula gratifying alike to the Socialists and the Gaullists.

Most importantly of all, the Socialist Party's disarmament plan was crucial in the electoral run-up because it packaged Socialist acceptance of the existing *Force de Frappe* – a position deemed indispensable electorally. The Socialists pledged to freeze new developments, then eventually negotiate de-nuclearisation in response to other countries' divestiture. Giscard can make no matching offer without a revolt by his Gaullist coalition partners.

Robin Cook: The political delusions of our political police

A year ago I wrote an article for the NEW STATESMAN in which I first registered my concern at the conduct of operations by the Special Branch. In the twelve months since then recorded 'sightings' of Special Branch officers have been few but they have not been reassuring. The authenticated cases are four in number.

First, in September last year two officers called at Oakdale Community College in Blackwood, South Wales and announced a professional interest in a WEA evening class on Great Marxist Writers, a course which included lectures on such well-known subversives as Jack London and Robert Tressell. Not only did they wish to know who the tutor was and who had handled its publicity, but they also wanted to inspect the enrolment for it.

In November a sergeant of the Strathclyde Special Branch called at Paisley College of Technology and requested to interview one of its students. He opened the interview by reminding the student that his father held his job as a civilian driver with the police force and having thus boldly broken the ice he pressed home his advantage by offering 'tax-free payments' in return for information on political activities of his colleagues. He then attempted to close the interview by producing a copy of the Official Secrets Act which he insisted that the student should now sign as their conversation had been confidential. The student wisely refused.

Then there was the visit of two Special Branch officers to Keele University, where they solicited the head porter of the students union to produce a list of 'dangerous types'. It is alleged that when he subsequently offered a list of 22 names they scorned to accept it on the grounds that they already had a better one of their own. This is intriguing since there are only 2,500 students at Keele, and it would therefore appear that one in a hundred has been enrolled in Special Branch records.

These cases are doubly disturbing because they all relate to enquiries on educational campuses, and raise an awesome doubt over our fond belief that our academic communities need not fear police surveillance. The final incident illuminates the use to which the Special Branch might apply the information which it gleaned from such exercises.

Last summer the workforce of Reinforcement Steel Services occupied its Greenwich factory. In the course of the occupation they discovered a memorandum signed by the Works Manager in which he recorded a visit from a 'Mr Meynard of Scotland Yard' about which the Manager minuted, 'He told me he had already checked on the two most likely persons responsible' (i.e. for labour unrest in the plant). There follows notes against two named employees. The entry against the first notes that he was convicted of an offence in 1954 - 20

years ago and at a time when the employee was a youth of 17. Ironically the Special Branch appears to have been trading in such tit-bits at the very time when parliament was passing the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act to protect offenders against information about spent convictions being divulged to their employers.

The second entry is worth quoting in full to obtain the true flavour of tittle-tattle which apparently fills Special Branch files:

The Special Branch have a file on this man for his political activities. They have four (sic) complaints on file against him of:

1. Distributing National Socialist literature.
2. Disturbing the peace during demonstrations.
3. Taking part in illegal demonstrations.

Each of these 'complaints' is in error in one way or another. There is no such thing in Britain as an illegal demonstration - not yet anyway. The employee in question has never been convicted, nor even charged with a breach of the peace. He has no connection with any National Socialist movement - although it is suspected that this reference may be a vulgar corruption of International Socialist. It is of course in the nature of such clandestine slander that its victim is given no opportunity of correcting the record.

It must be conceded that the response of the authorities to the exposure of such cases has indicated their own concern. Following the Paisley incident the Chief Constable expressed his 'distress' at its occurrence and the officer was transferred. An apology has been offered to Oakdale Community College and Merlyn Rees has clearly relished reminding the Special Branch that he too once taught evening classes for the subversive WEA. Nevertheless it is difficult to be entirely relaxed about a system which allowed four such cases to occur in the first place, and none of them appears to have prompted any institutional changes to prevent their recurrence.

A first step towards a democratic check on the operations of the Special Branch would be the publication of enough basic information on which to found a debate. In the course of the last year I collected the annual reports of 36 Chief Constables throughout Great Britain, and am indebted to Tony Bunyan of State Research for ploughing determinedly through them. Only one - Durham - contains any statement on its Special Branch. Conspicuous among those who consistently fail to record any information about the Special Branch is the Metropolitan Commissioner although a third of its officers are nominally attached to his force.

It is to the credit of the Home Secretary that we now can be precise as to the proportion based on Scotland Yard, as it was he who last week broke with the obfuscation of his predecessors ('about 1 per cent of

the police force') and gave actual numbers - 409 in London and up to 850 in the rest of England and Wales. The figures confirm that there has been a dramatic rise in the manpower of the Special Branch which in the early Sixties numbered only 200, all of whom were confined to the Metropolitan force. This expansion has gone by unnoticed by any public inquiry or parliamentary debate and with scant media investigation.

No doubt many, if not most, of these officers are engaged in perfectly legitimate police work, such as control of immigration, or protection of diplomats and dignitaries. Others are committed to containing terrorism, although the Anti-Terrorist Squad has been drastically pruned from 220 officers to 30 as there are no current investigations on the mainland: ironically the fight against terrorism, which provides the Special Branch with its most frequently articulated cover, appears to receive only a meagre share of its manpower. However there are undoubtedly a large number of Special Branch officers whose main task is riding hard on any political organisation that deviates too far from the centre and feeding the files which fill the 600,000 slots on the CID computer that have been allocated to the Special Branch.

It is in this last area that the role of the Special Branch has been widening most rapidly in recent years. In 1963 Lord Denning in the Profumo Report assured the public that the security services did not spy on the citizens' political opinions, except in so far as they are subversive, that is, they would contemplate 'the overthrow of the government by unlawful means'. This observation had at least the merit of providing a clear working definition of who might be the legitimate subjects of police surveillance and which was limited to those who might break the law. Yet by 1975 Lord Harris, the minister at the Home Office with departmental responsibility for the Special Branch, was offering the House of Lords a definition of subversion which had been widened so far that some of the noble lords no doubt thought it might well fit Labour's NEC: 'Subversion is defined as activities threatening the safety or wellbeing of the State and intended to undermine or overthrow parliamentary democracy by political, industrial or violent means.' There is no tiresome requirement here that surveillance should be restricted to those who contemplate unlawful acts. The officer has only to satisfy himself that he has unearthed a political or industrial activity which threatens the 'wellbeing of the State'. What we witness is the birth of quasi-crime: an action which does not render the offender liable to prosecution but will bring him under police surveillance.

Conveniently we have to hand an illustration from overseas of the dangers of granting such wide discretion to the police. After a long running feud with his own Special Branch the Premier of South Australia appointed Judge White to conduct an independent inspection of its records. His recent report concludes that a large number of citizens come under surveillance because they were 'suspected by Special Branch of holding or supporting "subversive" views by reason only of the fact that

(they) adopted policies or opinions which were "radical" or "to the Left" of an arbitrary centre point fixed by someone in the Special Branch'. This approach produced an eclectic range of suspects who came 'under notice' merely because they were active in a trade union, or attended a vigil of the peace movement or espoused women's liberation, or even because they campaigned for divorce law reform. Judge White was clearly startled to discover that the Special Branch had opened files on half his colleagues in the Supreme Court. The majority of the records on individuals are now being destroyed under his personal supervision.

The Australian parallel cannot be lightly shrugged off. All Special Branch forces in Australia were reorganised in 1945, following a visit by Sir Percy Sillitoe, then head of MI5, for the express purpose of advising on the development of their security services. Moreover the Commissioner of Police in South Australia from 1972 until his dismissal in the wake of the White Report was Mr Harold Salisbury, a former Chief Constable of the North and East Ridings of Yorkshire. It is therefore tempting to speculate whether the records of our Special Branch might have points of comparison with those of South Australia.

We cannot know, of course. Just as we have no way of knowing whether Paisley, Keele and Oakdale are the only occasions on which over-enthusiastic officers have sought information on students, or simply the only cases in which those approached have had the courage to say so and a determination to raise the approach publicly. Nor do we know whether Greenwich is the only occasion when the Special Branch passed information on the political activities of employees to their bosses, or just the only time the workers have obtained access to the files. We will only find out by calling for a White Report on our own Special Branch.

Ruth Hall: Colombia's 'democracy': drowning slowly in violence

It is with breath somewhat less than bated that the world awaits the result of the presidential elections here on Sunday. As Czechoslovakia was to Chamberlain in 1939, so is Colombia to Britain today – remote, its internal politics too baroque to contemplate.

Yet this election is important. Twenty years ago, in an attempt to put an end to the savage civil war of 1948-58. The *Frente Nacional* was formed and agreement reached between the Liberal and Conservative parties over an alternating four-year power deal. This is the first election since then in which the winning party will not be obliged to guarantee substantial minority power to the opposition. The *Frente Nacional* has been successful at least to the extent that Colombia is one of the few countries in Latin America to remain a democracy (the Left prefers to call it a 'civilian tyranny'). What will happen under the new deal is anybody's guess.

Colombia today is rather like *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, without the jokes. Robbery is rife, violence common, and poverty endemic. The violence is personal rather than political. When the German consul was stabbed recently outside Bogota's lushest hotel, in daylight and under the averted gaze of the tourist police, it was merely his valuables the assailants were after. Kidnapping is one of the major growth industries, along with drug smuggling, an activity indulged in by a fair number of politicians.

Colombia supplies North America with 95 per cent of its cocaine and marijuana, an export to which the Minister of Defence, General Varon Valencia, turns a blind eye. After four smugglers were imprisoned recently in Santa Marta, the Mafia took over the jail and flew the prisoners out, with the help, it is claimed, of helicopters trained in Panama by US Southern Command.

The retiring Liberal President, Alfonso Lopez Michelsen, who came to power four years ago with promises of social improvements is not entirely to blame for his failure to implement them. He has had some successes in curbing the massive inflation brought about by the coffee boom. But he

has been unable to control the production, officially illegal, of marijuana. The plant needs little cultivation, and where an acre of cotton might yield £500 a year, an acre of marijuana brings in £20,000. With such high profits, farmers have reduced production of staple foods for the home market, leading to further price rises and added misery for the poorer classes.

Bogota has doubled in size in the last three years and an estimated 6,000 illiterate and semi-starving peasants pour into the city every week. There, unable to find employment, they drift into the sordid shanty towns surrounding the city, helplessly breeding large numbers of children who die either of malnutrition or of gastrointestinal diseases brought about by polluted water and a non-existent sewage.

Industrial workers have not been helped by President Lopez Michelsen's laissez-faire policies. Though by tax reforms he has succeeded in robbing the rich a little, he has not given enough to the poor. The minimum wage for industrial workers is 83 pesos a day, while rural workers get 73 pesos (about £1). At this level, life is indeed unenviable. Only 40 per cent are in full employment and trade unions have little power to alter the situation. Membership is only about 20 per cent – not unnaturally, since with such high unemployment many companies refuse to employ union members.

Strikes, though not illegal, are discouraged, largely by force of arms. The army has ready access to emergency powers in this permanent state of siege. During the 24-hour general strike last September, 7,000 were arrested and tried by the military courts. Some are still in prison. Thirty-three people were killed, among them an eight-months pregnant woman and a ten-year-old boy. They were, it was explained, 'urban guerrillas'. Last week, five students were killed in demonstrations. Despite such disapproval from the authorities, the number of strikes has increased since September in ratio to the rise in the cost of living.

In recent weeks, the elections campaign has been much enlivened by transport

battles. Bus drivers are paid on commission by the number of passengers they can cram in. They stop at a bus-stop to pick up 20 passengers. But refuse to stop for just two or three. The continuing feud is one of the tourist sights of Bogota. Angry passengers, already incensed by a rise in fares, heave bricks at the buses and frequently set them on fire (sometimes their drivers as well). Understandably, the drivers are reluctant to work. The resulting riots bring out the army. Quite subtly, by Latin American standards, democracy is preserved and a military coup avoided by giving army personnel double pay.

There seems little to choose between the two major parties whose power is thus ensured – unless it be that the Liberals go to Mass at 8 a.m., the Conservatives at 9.

The Liberal Candidate, Turbay Ayala, has not been in politics 40 years for nothing. He has developed a fine command of cliché and a calming torpor of delivery. Instructed by his party machine to be more dramatic in gesture, he ended up at the Liberal banquet here conducting in precise 4/4 measure every phrase of his excessively tedious speech. The ensuing yawns (some delegates were unashamedly asleep) might well presage his victory in an apathetic electorate which abstains from voting, so great is the scepticism about change.

Turbay's rather negative qualities have also secured enormous financial support from the right wing of the Liberal party. Fearful of a repetition of the agrarian reforms introduced by the former President Carlos Lleras, the rich landowning liberals see Turbay as a puppet to be manipulated in their interest – particularly as he is an *arriviste*, scorned by the upper classes, but, they calculate, anxious to buy his way into such exclusive territories as the Jockey Club and *El Rincón*. On the other hand, Turbay has promised to govern with what is known as the 'emerging class' – drug smugglers, tax evaders and illegal exporters of coffee, emeralds and sugar.

Turbay's main opponent is the Conservative candidate, Belisario Betancur. Of distinguished appearance, he is (unlike Turbay) a consummate actor. His opponents' ire is particularly aroused by his television appearances, in which his pronouncements come over with all the deep humanity and gravity of Sir Michael Redgrave reading the list of Huntingdonshire cabmen. 'I am one of 22 children from a mining village in

Antioquia', he sorrows. '17 of whom died from gastro-intestinal problems.' The nation, he hopes, mourns with him.

Again unlike Turbay, Belisario is not against power sharing. Much to the fury of Liberal sectarians. He has promised that, should he be elected, he would appoint Liberals to the important posts of Minister of the Interior, Comptroller General and Attorney General. Turbay, while under the present constitution obliged to give some posts to Conservatives, is firmly against coalition.

A surprisingly popular late starter in the electoral campaign has been General Alvaro Valencia Tovar, recently sacked from the army on the grounds that he was not corrupt enough. An extremely tough anti-guerrilla leader, he was in charge of operations when the ex-priest guerrilla leader Camilo Torres was killed, and was also suspected of planning a military coup d'état. He founded his Movement for National Renewal only last December and is

winning some support.

The extreme Left has no chance of strong support. The three candidates – Communist, Maoist and Trotskyist – are, as usual, at loggerheads, concentrating rather on the minutiae of Peking/Moscow ideologies than on the problems facing Colombia. In an attempt to unite the factious Left against the established system, Enrique Santos Caldero, editor of the radical magazine *Alternativa* and scion of one of the most influential Liberal families, has been collecting 500,000 signatures to set up a single candidate representing the Left. He has nearly reached the target but is honestly despairing about the future. 'Conditions should be favourable for us', he says, 'but the language goes over their heads. What the people want is action, here and now, not abstruse political argument.'

No one is quite sure what will happen on or after June 4. Some of the rich *aristos* are deserting their baronial mansions to live most of the year in Europe or the United

States. Their motive is not merely to preserve their wealth, but also to protest against corruption and personal insecurity. They despise a society in which the judiciary is so corrupt that legal disputes dwindle into a battle of briefs, where favours are in the hands of easily-bought politicians; and where the police are too terrified to offer protection against robbery or violence.

Those of the rich who remain lock and bolt their doors, install guards, and resign themselves to having their cars stolen or broken into every few days. It is unlikely, however, that the large-scale revolution they fear will come to pass. The long-standing combination of easy money for the few and impotent apathy for the many should ensure the continuation of this uneasy democracy.

And if it be true, as recently argued in this magazine, that the maintenance of Scotch whisky imports is a guide to political stability, then Colombia is safe: 1977 saw an increase of 2,000 cases over the previous year's 200,000 cases of Scotch.

Sabotage, submarines and the secret Norwegian connection

Officially, Norway maintains a firm stand against allowing nuclear weapons to be stationed on its shores. Officially, its government is anxious not to provoke the Soviet Union. But the Norwegian people – who support both policies – are beginning to find out that something quite different is going on in secret. DUNCAN CAMPBELL reports.

Three days ago, Oslo's criminal court sentenced one of Norway's most decorated and distinguished Resistance veterans to a suspended term of imprisonment and ordered him to pay £700 costs, on charges of breaching official secrecy. Major Svein Blindheim's crime was to expose one of the most unpleasant parts of the secret history of this ostensibly peaceable country. During the 1950's, Blindheim, then a military intelligence officer, was sent to Finland on a secret mission to train right wing Finnish nationalists in sabotage and subversion. This was part of a considerable programme of CIA and British secret service intervention in Scandinavia. The sabotage squads trained by Blindheim then penetrated the Soviet Union across the Finnish border.

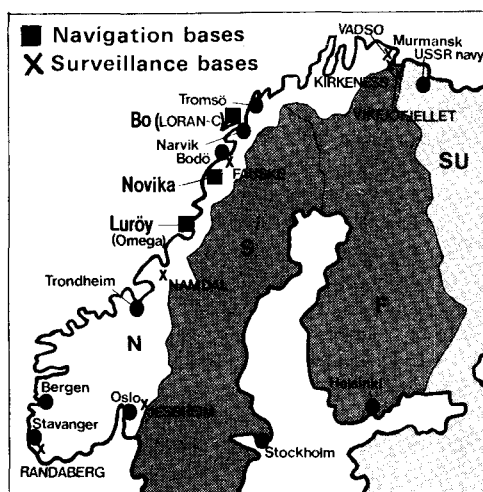
Blindheim revealed this work publicly last summer. He had supplied information about the sabotage training for an article in *Ny Tid*, a political weekly in Oslo. When the government and leading politicians of the period flatly denied the story, Blindheim was so enraged that he gave his own personal account in the next week's issue. Soon afterwards he was arrested.

Blindheim's is just one of a series of secrecy trials and proceedings which are currently hitting the headlines in Oslo. They highlight the considerable gap between Norway's official foreign policy and her

real – but covert – role in espionage and sabotage missions directed against the Soviet Union, and clandestine technical assistance to nuclear submarines.

The Norwegian people are not the keenest members of the Nato alliance. The Norwegian Labour Party, which has predominated in power since 1953, has traditionally inclined towards neutrality and anti-militarism. Just two months before signing the Nato pact in 1949, the government declared that no 'bases for the armed forces of foreign nations' would exist on Norwegian soil, save in case of imminent or actual attack. In 1961, the General Conference of the Labour Party voted almost unanimously to ban the stationing of nuclear weapons on Norwegian soil. This declaration duly holds force today.

Officially, Norway has maintained a posi-



Norway's proliferation of clandestine surveillance and navigation bases in Norway, supervised by the US.

tion of relative independence within Nato. The 'no bases' and 'no nuclear weapons' policies have had passive popular support. Now, however, with the increasing importance of Norway as the strategic 'northern flank' of Nato, the 'no bases' policy is being thoroughly undermined. And the 'no nuclear weapons' policy was undermined more than fifteen years ago when special facilities were constructed on Norwegian soil for Polaris submarines.

Norway has always sought (publicly) to avoid provocation of the Soviet Union. It forbids, for example, more than a token military presence closer than 500 kilometres to the Soviet border. This region includes the arctic plains of Finnmark, which were liberated in 1944 by the Red Army – who did not stay longer than necessary after the Nazis were vanquished, a fact still not forgotten. Yet immediately after the war Norway played eager host and partner to the clandestine operations of the British intelligence services, and later of the CIA, dispatching spies, saboteurs and killers to the Soviet Union – and Major Svein Blindheim among others to Finland.

Radio eavesdropping stations and under-sea listening posts, established in conjunction with the United States, continue in operation today, even in sites pressed hard up to the frontier and the sensitive Soviet military complex around Murmansk.

The Norwegian government has always claimed a belligerent independence of other intelligence agencies and has officially confined its own operations to counter espionage on Norwegian territory. In fact, it seems the Norwegians have been taught how to spy by the British. And the CIA has been going strong in Norway since the very start. The infamous U2 spy flight of CIA pilot Gary Powers, shot down over Soviet territory, was targeted to land at the Norwegian Bodo airfield.

Former CIA Director William Colby recently described in his memoirs *Honourable Men – My Life in the CIA*, how he worked in Scandinavia in the 1950's, training what he chooses to call 'resistance' teams to carry out sabotage operations within the Scandinavian states in the event

CDC continued to concentrate its efforts in the poorer countries and to look for productive projects in rural areas, so as to help in improving the lot of those most in need.

Sir Eric Griffith-Jones, KBE, CMG, QC, Chairman

Commitments

New commitments undertaken in 1977 amounted to £45m, spread over 23 projects in 13 countries; virtually the whole of this was in the poorer countries and 70% was in projects for the development of renewable natural resources. Projects financed by these new commitments covered a wide spectrum of agricultural activities, including the growing and processing of sugar-cane, rubber, oil palms, tobacco, tea, wattle, pedigree food-crop seeds, wheat and maize, the production of wood-pulp, forestry and training in agricultural management. There were also commitments to industrial ventures, low-cost housing and the supply of water and electricity.

Estimated total commitments at 31.12.77 were £333.9m, and investments were £260.6m.

Rural development and training

The agricultural projects which CDC is supporting, particularly those which set out to help small farmers to become more productive, have involved large numbers of some of the poorest members of the community; other projects in rural areas, organised on a plantation basis, offer the landless a living wage through regular employment, often including housing and welfare amenities, and a chance to learn new skills. Both types of projects, by their grass-roots nature, have real meaning for those living in poverty.

CDC believes that the transfer of management skills is as important for developing countries as the transfer of technology and of capital, which is why a great deal of effort is made in all projects under CDC management to train nationals to fit them for appointment to management positions of responsibility. Several of the larger CDC-managed projects have a specialised training manager. Much initial training is

given "on the job," supplemented later by attachment to other enterprises or by external courses. CDC itself finances and runs the Mananga Agricultural Management Centre in Swaziland which provides training in planning and control in agricultural management.

Projects

The established operational projects, with some exceptions, produced satisfactory results. World economic conditions and thin markets created difficulties for some of the manufacturing industries and agro-industrial projects. In particular, some manufacturers selling in home markets of countries whose main revenues were depressed by low commodity prices, experienced lower sales through reductions in consumption. The performance of commodity markets underlined the importance of establishing price stabilisation arrangements, where appropriate, so as to give confidence to producers to plan ahead. Agricultural projects producing crops for export again made significant contributions to the foreign exchange earnings of host countries, far exceeding the cost to the developing countries of servicing the capital invested by CDC in those projects.

1977 results

1977 was again a year of solid achievement. A surplus of £5.9m was appropriated to General Reserve, after charging administration costs and Treasury interest, and provisions against book value of projects and taxation.

CDC's Annual Report and Statement of Accounts 1977 is available from Government Bookshops and HMSO Government Publications Agents, Price £2.50



Commonwealth Development Corporation

33 HILL STREET, LONDON W1A 3AR

of Soviet invasion. His account overlapped with what Blindheim had already revealed, although his own description of the squad's purposes was a little more anodyne – and it provides further embarrassment for the foreign policy makers of the Norwegian Labour Party. In recent press interviews, Colby has made it quite clear that the Norwegian government was as much 'in the know' about the CIA work as it wished to be.

Another embarrassing revelation has been the secret *Schei Report on Loran-C and Omega*. Two former MPs of the Socialist Left Party, Berge Furre and Finn Gustavsen, are currently under threat of impeachment by the Protocol Committee of the Storting (somewhat similar to the UK Commons Committee of Privileges) for leaking the report to the public. It concerns two navigation systems for ships and aircraft which work by transmitting radio signals. These have a special relevance to the cold and not so cold wars of the last twenty years since they can provide navigation information underwater to US and British Polaris submarines in the Norwegian and Arctic seas.

To launch missiles accurately, the submarines must always know exactly where they are. Good, continuous underwater navigation is therefore vital – and in providing it, the Loran-C and Omega stations are indirectly violating Norway's official 'no nuclear weapons' policy.

The first Loran-C station was constructed at Bo in 1959 to meet an urgent US 'Top Secret Military Requirement'. To anyone with the slightest awareness of the path of the arms race in the 1960s, that had to mean Polaris submarines. Yet the connection with Polaris was lightly passed over by the then Prime Minister and Cabinet sub-committee concerned with security and intelligence. The decision to build a Loran-C station was ratified by the Storting, somewhat belatedly, and with no guidance as to its true military role. The Schei Report makes it clear that clandestine co-operation between Norwegian defence officials and the US was aimed at avoiding democratic supervision and the inconvenience of public policies on nuclear weapons: 'the US authorities would do their best to make it possible for the Norwegian government to avoid submitting the matter to the Storting'. The Loran-C station was disguised as a development of an earlier and considerably different system which had been approved as part of the NATO deal. The Storting

believed, moreover, that it was largely a civil system.

Similar obfuscation surrounded the establishment of an Omega transmitting station, of a special communications station at Norvika, and of other projects including underwater listening, tracking and monitoring of Soviet satellites and seismic bomb explosion detectors. In each case the United States conspired to play down the military significance of the project, not for reasons of US or allied security, but to avoid embarrassing helpful Norwegian politicians who might one day be confronted with their own dishonesty. The Norwegian civil servants who dealt directly with the Americans had a fairly clear picture of the real purpose of the projects; they misrepresented the facts to other departments and to ministers; the Cabinet sub-committee looked at the issues and weeded out the controversial points, and finally, Norway's elected representatives took their decision on the basis of a 'sanitised' version of the truth.

Even so, some of the decisions, such as



the final establishment of the Omega station, created controversy both in Norway and elsewhere.

In 1976 the Norwegian debate on Omega and Loran-C intensified when a former intelligence analyst, Captain Hellebust, published a report which criticised the government's decision-taking and secrecy in such affairs. The official response was to set up the Schei Commission. But when the Commission reported it affirmed that no civil servant deserved reproach and that information provided had been 'correct and sufficient'. The Schei Report was an example of the very duplicity the Commission had been charged to investigate. More than half, containing all the vital evidence, was kept secret to avoid official embarrassment. The two Socialist Left MPs, Furre and Gustavsen, leaked it quite openly last summer after the government had turned down their demand that it be declassified. So far, 20,000 copies have been sold.

The next trial in Norway this autumn will be a classic of official secrecy. Although final charges have not yet been prepared despite an intervening lull of a year, the bare bones are known. Ivor Johannsen, a publisher's assistant, had devoted considerable time to discovering the nature and history of Norway's intelligence services, and the connections of the eavesdropping

bases with US intelligence. He had consulted telephone directories and official lists, visited sites all over Norway, and pieced together a list of the eavesdropping bases. Others have repeated the easy task since (see map). It can be seen that there are far more of these than Norwegian national security requirements would suggest. Three are extremely close to the Soviet border, and all of them are 'secret', it is alleged. It may be that the stations do provide useful material for Norway. But, although the bases are undoubtedly known to the Soviet Union, and their presence (including American officials for 'liaison') an undoubted provocation, they are once again a secret from the Norwegian people and the Storting. One can argue that the advantages of such stations, although theoretically illegal, outweigh the risks. But it is incontrovertible that the secrecy serves only to avoid embarrassing officials and some politicians whose dishonesty is revealed by the lack of accord between public pronouncements and secret activities.

Similar fear of embarrassment led the Norwegian government to lean heavily on the United States to censor a book by two former US intelligence analysts, Marchetti and Marks, who wrote *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*. Several of the sections censored from the book concerned clandestine activities in conjunction with the Norwegian government and were struck out on Norwegian insistence. It was, said Marchetti to Oslo journalists investigating the Johannsen case last year, '(Norwegian) internal political considerations which were decisive'.

Johannsen had also gathered lists of names of Special Branch and military intelligence personnel, largely by telephoning police stations and asking. He had brought Blindheim and his researches to *Ny Tid* last summer. The publication of the two *Ny Tid* articles and a subsequent interview with Johannsen in another paper led directly to the arrest of all concerned. Two *Ny Tid* journalists, Jan Otto Hauge and Ingolf Haakon Teigene will be tried with Johannsen, in what is now known as the 'Lists' case. One friend who helped Johannsen store his research material has already been given a six-month prison sentence, although this verdict has now been overturned on appeal.

A new line in Nato thinking holds that the Soviet presence in the north has hitherto been genuinely defensive and designed to repel Nato aggression – justifiable in the light of recent revelations. But now, the Nato line goes, the expansionism of Soviet foreign policy, combined with the buildup of the Soviet Navy at Murmansk as elsewhere, provides a new threat to Nato and Europe – that of a direct attack on and invasion of northern Scandinavia to protect the sea routes from Murmansk.

Nato planners and Norwegian politicians will have to examine and confront these new views. So will the Norwegian people. But if the truth of these issues is as deliberately concealed by politicians and civil servants as it has been in the past, then they will serve only to undermine further the democratic institutions that Nato is so fiercely avowed to defend.

THEOSOPHY THE WISDOM RELIGION

Theosophy is a restatement of the eternal truths behind all the world's religions. It is a comprehensive non-sectarian, non-dogmatic religious philosophy, incorporating knowledge of Nature's inner laws and processes. All serious religious scholars and aspirants should have some knowledge of at least its basic principles.

Write for information to:

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PO Box 16, London W3 6HS

Winston Fletcher

A setback in the Long March of consumerism

Consumerism – which may be said to have begun in 1927, when two young Americans published a tract called *Your Money's Worth* – was an explosively-growing movement until the early 1970s. The American Consumers' Union achieved a membership of 1.3 million around that time, and our own Consumers' Association reached 174,000. In 1975 the government added the National Consumer Council to the Office of Fair Trading, and set off a rapid growth of local Consumer Advice Centres.

Lately however, membership growth has stalled. Is this just a pause for refreshment, before a second wind carries consumerists onto the boards of industry and into the highest places of power, as Michael Young so passionately advocates? Or have the consumerists achieved their key aims, and righted the most iniquitous wrongs, so that their only remaining task is to police the existing legislation? These questions were asked, and partially answered, in London last week at a high-powered think-in of government and municipal consumer-protection officials, businessmen, journalists and consumerists – chaired by the velvet-tongued Brian Walden, in matching jacket. The theme of their debate was: 'What has consumerism done for the consumer?'

In the left corner – though he denied being too pinkish – was Charles Medawar, one-time Nader Raider, and now Research Director of the Public Interest Research Centre and Consumer Audit. In the right corner, and in superior numbers, sat a galaxy of senior businessmen and their advisers, including Robert Heller (ICI adperson, and editor of *Management Today*), Jeffrey Joseph (from the US Chamber of Commerce), and Harry Shepherd (Marks and Spencer's own-brand consumerism guru).

The businessmen's argument was that consumerism has grown too much – thereby interfering with the businessman's freedom to find out what consumers want and give it to them – and that it costs too much. To take the second point first: while nobody doubts that consumerist activity must use real resources, nobody was ready to agree on how much it does cost.

The official government figure is £46 million a year, or £2 per household. This disregards industry's own costs in responding to and complying with consumerist demands: Marks and Spencer estimated them at £300-500 million a year, but Robert Heller ballooned the figure to £2,000 million, which if right would be £100 per family per year. Jeffrey Joseph, for the US, reported on studies carried out at Wash-

ington University purporting to show that complying with Federal regulations in 1976 cost American industry \$62 billion, roughly 3.6 per cent of gross domestic product.

Whichever guesstimate you prefer, it is a lot of money. But arguments on how well it is being spent readily begin to resemble ferocious debates on the length of a piece of string. The consumerists misleadingly compare the sums involved to the £1,140 million spent on advertising: the businessmen retaliate equally illogically by relating them to industrial investment, or to the paltry sums being spent on kidney machines.

As with all other governmental and similar expenditure, nobody can possibly say whether consumers (or people, as they used to be called) are getting value for the money being spent on their behalf. Nor – as Charles Medawar forcibly argued last week – is all of the cash actually spent in protecting consumers. All that is certain is that there is no such thing as a free lunch: therefore, even the most benevolent regulation costs something somewhere. (But then free enterprise isn't gratis, either.)

The businessmen's next complaint begins from the number of transactions which apparently cause no complaint. If you count each separate newspaper, bottle of milk, bus-fare and so on, then you find that as a nation we make some 200,000,000,000 purchases a year, supplied to us courtesy of public and private industry. How many of these items turn out to be defective or inadequate? The Office of Fair Trading received about 59,000 complaints last year; local Consumer Advice Centres handled an estimated 750,000; and the Weights and Measures Inspectorate (now called the Trading Standards, or Consumer Protection Officers) an unknown further number, some which they themselves initiated.

A fair approximation would be that this makes a total of 2,000,000 complaints from all sources in a year. It sounds horrifying until you calculate that it equals only one in 100,000 purchases: or, putting it another

way, that the average citizen will only lodge a complaint once every 28 years.

Consumerists immediately allege, with some justice, that this is a tip-of-the-iceberg effect. John Methven, when at the Office of Fair Trading, said that research findings suggested about 25 million unreported complaints every year. And a study reported last autumn in the *Harvard Business Review* – scarcely a mouthpiece of subversive radicalism – showed US consumers to be 'dissatisfied' with 11 per cent of the goods and services they buy. Whatever the figures, consumerists remain convinced that the world is full of deceptive sales techniques and shoddy goods, while industrialists are equally certain that they struggle hard and successfully to satisfy myriads of customers.

Backed by Marks and Spencer's formidable reputation, Harry Shepherd asked gently how any consumerist organisation could really know more about people's wishes than firms which perform millions of transactions in each day's market-place? Or, he suggested, might the consumerists be less interested in what the public wants than in what they self-righteously think the public ought to get?

Medawar and his colleagues remain unmoved. They are confident that indeed the halt in their movement's growth is only a bivouac on the crusade – and that the politicians, characteristically, have become bored with the issues just as the public is really beginning to care. If some recently-published market-research from the American Sentry Insurance Group is anything to go by, they may be right.

The study showed businessmen to be thoroughly out of step with public opinion, and especially so in regard to consumerism. Taking one example: 88 per cent of senior business managers disagreed with the statement that most companies 'are so concerned with making a profit that they don't care about quality.' Consumers, however, thought the statement true – by a majority of more than two to one.

the Leveller

peace news

On Friday, May 19, *The Leveller*, *Peace News* and the National Union of Journalists were convicted of contempt of court for naming Colonel B.

They named this man, an anonymous witness in the Official Secrets case against former soldier John Berry and journalists Crispin Aubrey and Duncan Campbell, to draw attention to this prosecution and to contest unnecessary secrecy in government.

The original contempt charges were for 'flouting the direction' of the magistrate in that case, but the prosecution's case collapsed in mid-trial and the Lord Chief Justice managed to find the respondents guilty of 'frustrating the arrangements of the court'.

The convictions make it easier for anonymous witnesses to appear in court in future and impose further dangerous restrictions on the open administration of justice and the public's right to know what happens in courts.

Peace News and *The Leveller* must pay fines of £500 each and, with their costs, the bill could total £5,000. This could jeopardise the future of these courageous papers. We therefore urge all readers to make donations to their defence fund.

Send donations to Peace News/Leveller Defence Fund, 5, Caledonian Road, London N1.

Signed:

Lord Avebury
Lord Brockway
Robin Cook, M.P.
Christopher Price, M.P.
Jo Richardson, M.P.
Ron Thomas, M.P.
Margaretta d'Arcy
John Arden
Pat Arrowsmith
Brigid Brophy
Ken Coates
Prof. Bernard Crick
Jonathan Dimbleby
Paul Foot
Prof. John Griffiths
Peter Hain
Stuart Hall
Prof. E.J. Hobsbawm
Mgr Bruce Kent
Dennis Lemon
Denis MacShane
Bel Mooney
Tony Smythe
Tariq Ali
Nicolas Walter

The Great Cloning Hoax

Financially speaking, a book called In His Image: the Cloning of a Man is one of the publishing industry's triumphs of the year. It purports to tell how a body-cell from 'Max', an aged American multi-millionaire, was implanted a-sexually in a young Asian virgin, and brought to life as a perfect, baby copy of 'Max'. The fact that it has been denounced as a hoax by almost every medical scientist familiar with the evidence has not abashed either its eminent publishers – Lippincott, in America, and Hamish Hamilton here – or its author, Mr David Rorvik. Both firms take the view that they have published – in the public interest – a complex, but thoroughly detailed account of a scientific event, and if it is 'controversial' it is not their fault. Rorvik, meanwhile, has been called to testify on oath before the Health and Welfare committee of the US House of Representatives. Here Dr DEREK BROMHALL, a biologist whose published work on cloning is used and quoted by Rorvik, shows that the scientific argument in the book is so shoddy that it could not have survived even a moderately sceptical examination. The episode is something of a case-study in the commercial exploitation of a highly-emotional issue.

The story-line of *In His Image* begins with David Rorvik receiving a phone call from an aged millionaire, identified only as 'Max', who asks Rorvik to find him a scientist prepared, in total secrecy, to clone him a son – that is, to create by a-sexual reproduction a perfect genetic copy of himself. One might think that a multi-millionaire so intent upon keeping a low profile would command less risky methods of recruitment than calling-up a freelance journalist – but no matter. Rorvik throws in his lot with Max, and with a million dollars as bait, sets out to measure-up a good many scientists for the job. He does this by 'shamelessly posing under an assumed name as one interested in writing articles about them and their work.'

The scientist he supposedly finds is named merely as 'Darwin', and is described as a gynaecologist who has spent all his professional life observing the behaviour of eggs, sperm, embryos and fetuses. Such experience is rare indeed: one would think that if any such eminence existed his disappearance into Max's secret programme would not go unnoticed by his professional colleagues.

We are told that the laboratory in which Darwin and his collaborators worked was somewhere in the tropical Orient, where there are rubber plantations, nutmeg trees, rice paddy, and, most important, an abundance of compliant Oriental women, happy to make available their eggs and wombs to the tireless experimenters. Tireless they must have been, because we are asked to believe that in just two years a team of three scientists, plus some nurses and technicians who had no idea what was going on, plus a secret collaborator somewhere off-stage, perfected all the techniques required to clone a man. This they did without wasting time on experiments with laboratory animals, thus closing the gap between a young frog and an old American multi-millionaire in one stupendous leap.

One must think all the time in terms of a respectable and serious publisher, trying to assess this tale for credibility before commencing to market it. There have been some improbabilities already, but there are more to come.

'Darwin's' operation reaches the point where embryo clones must be implanted in the wombs of surrogate mothers. Nearby

farms and plantations, therefore, are scoured for young virgins, who are selected after stringent physical and psychiatric tests – the woman gynaecologist on the cloning team, called Mary, matches 'Darwin's' versatility by turning out to be a psychiatrist. It soon becomes apparent that of all the young virgins who have given their bodies to science, there is one who stands out as a candidate for biological history. She is named as 'Sparrow', said to be 'going on seventeen', and maintains the general un-traceability of the personnel on *In His Image* by turning out to be an orphan – her parents having been killed in a 'bush-war skirmish' which left 'Sparrow' with a withered hand.

**'Rorvik's purpose
... was to string
together something
which might
convince the
lay reader ...'**

No mere walking womb, this remarkable girl is able within a few months to learn English from scratch, read anything given to her, discuss philosophy, beat 'Max' at chess, and turn out to be a first-class portrait painter. It seems almost inevitable, as the other surrogates fail to carry their cloned 'Maxes', that Sparrow will be the one to conceive – and so she does. She also falls in love with 'Max', and he with her ('Sparrow', we are told, 'was assuming a place in his life almost as important as the clone itself') thus preventing the story becoming too clinical, and at the same time avoiding, or anyway blurring, some delicate moral issues.

The pregnancy proceeds without a hitch, and in December 1976 'Sparrow' and entourage fly via Mexico to California, so that the clone can be born a US citizen. Two weeks before Christmas 'Sparrow' is delivered of a perfect baby boy, regarded by 'Max' as his 'contribution to the American

bi-centennial'. Nobody, however, breathes a word until fifteen months later, when Rorvik publishes his lucrative book.

The tale is a startling one, which raises grave issues – and which contains many scientific, political, geographic and merely human implausibilities. Furthermore, by Rorvik's own account it is not *exactly* what happened: due to 'Max's' passion for anonymity, there have been alterations so that 'names, dates and descriptive details of both person and place are at considerable variance with reality.'

Having made this admission, Rorvik proceeds to give verisimilitude to his story by including large tracts of scientific, or rather quasi-scientific detail. And it is here that any publisher seriously interested in the credibility of his story ought to have been able to see through the whole thing with very little effort. (It's important to remember that Lippincott, as one of the world's biggest publishers of medical textbooks, have easy access to expert scientific advice.)

Rorvik first tries to soften-up the reader with quotations from eminent scientists, including Nobel Prize winners, suggesting that human cloning is not only feasible but imminent. Now, in the 1960s, following the first cloning in frogs (strictly, the African Clawed Toad) it seemed that mammalian cloning might not be so hard, and several distinguished men of science made statements they have lived to regret. Rorvik gives much prominence to Joshua Lederberg (a Nobel laureate) saying:

There is nothing to suggest any particular difficulty about accomplishing this in mammals or man, though it will rightly be admired as a technical tour-de-force when it is first accomplished. It places man on the brink of a major evolutionary perturbation.

But Rorvik does not inform the reader that this statement was made in 1962. Lederberg now says:

In 1962 – quite a few years ago – I did feel cloning was a hypothetical possibility . . . I was unaware of the fundamental obstacles. I was wrong in 1962.

Having suggested that human cloning is almost a fait accompli, requiring only the encouragement of talent by money and will-power, Rorvik goes on to discuss what he supposes to be techniques for cloning, genetic engineering and the manipulation of recombinant DNA. This is done by way of semi-digested gobbets of scientific literature, prefaced in each case by formulas like: 'I observed in another report —', or 'He noted etc'. (There are only two instances of direct speech in the book, one being the moment when 'Max' says to Rorvik: 'Right now you may be the most important man in the world'.)

His errors are apt to be monumental, as when he describes Dr Beatrice Mintz's research on disaggregated mouse embryos as a 'quasi form of mammalian cloning'.

Using the eggs of mice, which though not quite as small as human eggs are nonetheless

very small and difficult to work with – one could create hundreds of identicals by persistently taking apart two-to-eight-celled embryos, letting them grow and then disassembling them again, if one wished, *ad infinitum*.

This is nonsense. To begin with, it is absurd that anyone claiming familiarity – let alone expertise – in this area should not know that human eggs are about three times *bigger* than mouse eggs. More important, he quite misunderstands the process by which all embryos grow. As we were taught at school, this occurs because cells divide, and thus multiply in number. But Rorvik – and, by his account, 'Darwin' – don't seem to understand that after the first couple of cleavages this is an obviously *irreversible* process. As they divide, the cells begin the process of specialisation which eventually turns them into skin cells, bone cells or whatever: it is absurdly ignorant to imagine that developing embryonic matter can be returned to Square One as often as one pleases. Nor did Beatrice Mintz's work suggest that it could be done.

Reference to my own work with rabbit embryos is made briefly in the text of the book, and in a note at the end. I am described (Rorvik's interpretation) as 'an Oxford scientist who had gone, if not "straight for the throat" (in attempting to clone a mammal) then in at least an only slightly wavering line.'

I first encountered Mr Rorvik when he wrote to me in May 1977 asking my advice about mammalian cloning, and inviting my comments on what I thought might have been the outcome of the research of other scientists had their techniques been directed specifically to mammalian cloning. Although I had some reservations about his approach, he seemed well-informed, and I was persuaded to help him in what I assumed was a review of the subject. (His letter began: 'I am currently working on a new book and wish to discuss in it some of the prospects of mammalian cloning.') With my reply I sent him a nine-page copy of the abstract of my doctoral thesis, recording some seven years' work on the feasibility of transplanting the nuclei of mammalian eggs, and referred him to the microfilm of the thesis itself.

I heard no more until the publication of *In His Image*, since which Rorvik has been asked why he found it necessary to ask me about cloning techniques some five months after 'Sparrow' had allegedly given birth – by which time he and the 'Darwin' team ought to have been better-informed than anyone else in the world. To this Rorvik says that he was merely assessing the state-of-the art and that his inquiry wasn't inconsistent with knowledge on his part that a clone already existed. In the television chat-show formula to which he has confined himself, it has not been possible to get behind this answer. But it will hardly do.

The results of my work with the nuclei of rabbit eggs were published as a paper in *Nature* on 25 December 1975. Rorvik's own publicity describes this as the only paper in the English language that reports upon an attempt to clone a mammal, and 'Darwin' is described in *In His Image* as using experimental techniques clearly extra-



From Rorvik's cover: 'Drawing Hands' by M. C. Escher

polated – in rather daring manner – from my own.

When my paper came out, the 'Darwin' operation was supposed to be in full flood, and Rorvik was supposed to be 'shooting off' reports of the latest work to Max as they came out. It is inconceivable that such a research programme, if it ever existed, would not have monitored *Nature*, and almost as hard to believe that if Rorvik were genuine he would not have written to me immediately after publication, rather than seventeen months later. It would be even more difficult to believe that 'Darwin', working without any detailed knowledge of my work, should have just happened to develop the very same experimental techniques.

The library records show that neither Rorvik nor anyone remotely associated with him has had access to my thesis, in which the techniques are described in detail. From this I deduce that the nine-page abstract which I sent in July 1977 was sufficient for Rorvik's purpose, which was to string together something which might convince the lay reader of the reality of human cloning. Since the techniques in question have not led to the production of a cloned mammal of any kind, he has had to push out into the unknown, and in doing so he comes seriously unstuck.

Very simply, there would be three stages in the production of a cloned mammal. First, the nucleus of the egg, which contains the maternal genes, must be removed or destroyed, so that the egg contains only cytoplasm. Second, a body cell from the toad or millionaire to be cloned, containing a full set of genes in its nucleus, must be transplanted into the cytoplasm of the empty egg in such a way that the egg is not only undamaged, but also behaves as though it had been normally fertilised by the arrival of a sperm. (Such an 'activated' egg will initiate cell division, but it will only be normal if the transplanted nucleus is able to respond fully to the signals it receives from the egg.) Third, the developing embryo must be transferred to a foster mother at precisely the right time, and in the right stage of development, for it to implant in the womb and grown to term. These three stages have not been completed for any mammal. In my research

on rabbits I was able to show that a body cell taken from an *embryo*, itself only two days old, could in rare cases 'fertilise' a rabbit egg, which would then begin to divide and form a normal looking embryo. But this is a very long way indeed from the production of a cloned rabbit.

'Darwin', even by Rorvik's account, had to make a lot of breakthroughs in two years to produce a cloned human. Some of them Rorvik feels he cannot reveal, for 'ethical' reasons, but the absurdities in what he does reveal are very substantial.

Of several techniques which may be used to 'enucleate' eggs (ie remove their nuclei) 'Darwin' is reported as using a chemical called Cytochalasin B. It is true that this may be used with cultured cells: at a certain concentration of Cytochalasin B the nuclei of some cells are extruded. But this technique simply does not work with egg cells – a fact of which Rorvik was clearly unaware when he wrote to me in May 1977, because one passage of his letter reads:

... a relevant observation is to wonder what might have happened had Ladda and Estensen used Cytochalasin B to remove both mouse body cell nuclei and mouse egg cell nuclei and then fused the enucleated eggs with the body cell nuclei.

In my reply I did not happen to point out that this was an impossibility, and Rorvik clearly went on to guess that Cytochalasin B might be used to enucleate human eggs. 'Darwin' simply could not have done that.

Two methods might be used to introduce the donor nucleus into the enucleated egg: microsurgery, or cell fusion. 'Darwin' is reported by Rorvik as using fusion: but this is a technique only usable for limited experiments. Its drawback is that the egg must first be stripped of its protective outer coating – the zona pellucida – and once this is done even an egg which has been normally fertilised has virtually no chance of growing to term. The most that can be said is that mouse eggs can survive in the test tube – but not in a living mouse – when stripped of the zona pellucida. Naked, fertilised rabbit eggs will divide in a test-tube culture, but instead of forming embryos they merely produce colonies of cells. Clearly, for the higher mammals, an intact zona pellucida is essential to the organisation of the pre-implantation embryo.

We are not told what type of body cell from 'Max' was used to fuse with 'Sparrow's' enucleated egg although 'Max' is thoughtfully provided with a benign skin cancer as a possible source, presumably because Rorvik has read of experiments with frogs in which cancer cells used as donors have produced normal frogs. Whatever the type of cell, it had to come from a man in his sixties. In no animal, not even the lowly frog, has a clone been produced from an adult, let alone an aged body cell.

In frogs, where the source of donor cells has been a tadpole, the success rate – judged by the production of normal-looking tadpoles – is less than one in the thousand by direct nuclear transplantation. This may be much improved by 'serial transfer', in which imperfect embryos from the first stage are used as a source of further donor cells. 'Darwin', through Rorvik, claims to have used 'serial transfer' to obtain better

results with human eggs: this is entirely ludicrous. If an enucleated mammalian egg, with a donor nucleus, cannot divide normally, it does not produce a partial embryo, as occurs in frogs. It merely dies. Rorvik, obviously, has made a hapless guess that what happens in frogs may also happen in mammals.

Now, the reason why adult body cells cannot be used as clone donors is that they are too specialised, and when cloned they merely give rise to abnormalities. At least, they do in frogs. But 'Darwin' knows a trick or two that we do not, because we are told that he has made some 'biochemical breakthroughs' which encouraged body cells to 'forget their specialities and start all over again'. This is the most absurd part of the whole book. Anyone capable of making such a 'breakthrough' would have solved on the way most of the problems of tissue regeneration and of cancer development: it would be immoral and probably impossible for him and his team to keep silent about it, and they would receive every imaginable Nobel Prize on publication.

The treatment 'Darwin' applied to his eggs and embryos is described in startling terms. They were:

chemically primed, stretched, denuded of their outer protective layers, pumped up, cooled down, injected, dissected, assembled and disassembled, fused, fertilised, jolted, shocked, irradiated and sometimes completely dissolved -

What, not beaten or flogged into submission? Nobody can fault 'Darwin' for not having envisaged all the possibilities. But how could he and his tiny team have found the time to do, with usable controls, such an infinity of experiment? Especially as they were at the same time making basic improvements in culture media, of which we hear only that they result from 'discoveries related to some of the proteins and enzymes contained in eggs and embryos.' Similarly, when fusing eggs and cells 'Darwin' added things to it from time to time. Eye of newt and toe of frog, wool of bat and tongue of dog, perhaps? Certainly some powerful spell must have been worked over his cauldron.

The implantation of the embryo clones was something of a magic trick too, considering that we are still waiting to hear of the first successful implantation of a human egg fertilised *in vitro* by normal sperm. Between November 1975 and February 1976 'Darwin' & Co allegedly implanted seven embryo clones, one for every monthly cycle of only two girls, 'one of them 'Sparrow'. By mid-March, she was pregnant. We know the rest - if we choose to believe it.

My object in dealing with this ridiculous book at length is not simply to destroy its credibility - that, to a great extent, has already been done. It is rather to show how easy it is, given a little serious inquiry, to see through Rorvik's claims. Perhaps the hapless - though now well-rewarded - Rorvik is one of those people who come genuinely to believe their own fantasies. I am, however, more concerned with the publishers who have chosen to exploit the book.

They have justified themselves by much talk suggesting it is their job to bring forward 'controversial' works like *In His Image*, with the idea of 'informing the

public on a vital issue'. But *In His Image* is not controversial in the sense that any worthwhile argument can be mounted on the basis of its own intrinsic worth. It only becomes 'controversial' because of the act of the publishers themselves in claiming (Hamish Hamilton, London) that it is 'the story of the most dramatic biological experiment of the twentieth century' (which it certainly isn't) and that Rorvik

describes fully the circumstances and details of the scientific procedure itself. His attention to the moral issues and his thorough coverage of the scientific background, along with his own very impressive credentials, yield a startling and fascinating story . . .

As we have seen, those scientific details which Rorvik has produced are wildly mistaken, and while he makes frequent allusion to moral issues, it can't be said he does anything to clarify them. His 'credentials', such as they are, might impress his blurb-writer, but surely no-one else.

No doubt we cannot expect a general publisher, such as Hamish Hamilton of London, to possess a great deal of scientific expertise. But it cannot be difficult or expensive to take advice: and any biologist reasonably familiar with current work on nuclear transplants would easily be able to demolish Rorvik's flimsy structure. And it is not as though Hamish Hamilton were not aware that the story was something less than copper-bottomed. They admit on the jacket of *In His Image* that

Some people . . . will attack it as a complete fabrication.

What is to be said about a major publishing firm which puts out a book, knowing

'In no animal, not even the lowly frog, has a clone been produced from an adult cell'

that it may be 'a complete fabrication', but which does not make any serious effort to examine the book's credentials?

The position of Lippincott's, the American publisher, is even more extraordinary, in view of their status as medical publishers. Despite the fact that Rorvik's work, if true, would record the greatest medical event on this or any other century, the Medical Division at Lippincott was not involved. *In His Image* was published by the 'Adult Trade Division', whose marketing director, Mr Arthur Stiles, has said:

The Medical Division people may have an opinion but we didn't ask for their views/permission. We're publishing David Rorvik's book on the cloning of a human as non-fiction on the strength of Mr Rorvik's credentials. (Medical World News, 3 April 1978).

Incuriosity could hardly go further. It is, however, an incuriosity which is very much

in Mr Stiles's short-term commercial interest.

Rorvik himself says that he wrote the book for two reasons: because he claims it is true, and to provide discussion about a very important issue. Apparently he did not write it to make money, although he does not deny that it will make him a millionaire. One need not look much further for the true motivation, though I shall be happy to eat my words if Mr Rorvik chooses to give a million dollars or so to cancer research. Interviewed in the June, 1978 issue of *Penthouse* magazine, however, he discloses a rather different idea about what to do with the money:

I've been thinking that I might use it to get myself cloned. I don't dislike myself, and I think that in many ways I've been a useful member of society.

I often think, 'Why aren't there more people like myself?' And that's the truth.

The desire to clone must surely be the ultimate form of self-adulation, beside which other forms of narcissism pale into insignificance. It would be a wryly amusing if the whole tale were to end in some other merchant of fantasy getting away with Rorvik's winnings.

The real trouble is that all the synthetic controversy whipped up by Rorvik and his publishers may well have confused people's thinking about what will eventually be an immensely important issue. The consequences of manipulating the genes in the nuclei of the cells of your own bodies will not be so instantly dramatic as the explosion of nuclear weapons. But the effects - if our society survives - will be more far-reaching. Because we are dealing with the delicate mechanisms that make us what we are, individually, and what our children will become, genetic 'engineering' is not a remote and impersonal threat, like the Bomb, but something intensely personal and intimate. What is involved is our survival and evolution: as a species we are unique in being able, potentially, to control and manipulate our own biological destiny.

The techniques which would be required are indeed maturing dramatically, and any day now we may expect to hear of the birth of the first baby to have begun life as an egg fertilised *in vitro*. We are prepared to this event because the techniques of *in vitro* fertilisation and embryo transfer in laboratory and domestic animals have become routine; and because we have for long been aware of the efforts of biologists and gynaecologists to help sterile couples have their own babies in this way. This will involve its own moral and emotional issues, without doubt.

The time to discuss with real intensity the implications of cloning for the human race will be when the first perfect cloned mammal is produced from the body cell of an adult donor. To repeat: that time is a very long way away, and it is perfectly possible that, for reasons we cannot foresee, it will never come. All that can result from faked-up controversies which wildly exaggerate the present capacities of biological science will be confusion and alarm, and perhaps an emotional backlash from society which will make more difficult the task of discovering what are the real issues that we have to face in dealing with our genetic inheritance.

London Diary

□ Surely the logical conclusion of George Baker's impeccable judgment in the Paton case is that a woman has the sole right to decide whether or not she wishes to give birth to a living child; if her husband has no say in this painful and private matter then neither should the State. In fact I have never understood the concern which the anti-abortion lobby seeks in the internal workings of the bodies of total strangers. But no doubt the controversy will continue, based, I suppose, on the dubious theory that a high population level is in the public interest.

I was both surprised and delighted to see that counsel for Mr Paton complained that a modern Englishman has fewer rights than a husband in ancient Rome. Surprised, because I remember that a paterfamilias had the power to deal out capital punishment in the home, which seems a poor precedent, and delighted that someone should have found a use for all that Roman law we once learnt at Oxford. I remember spending weeks getting by heart the nicer points of the ownership of chariots, and the various ways of manumitting a slave: information which never came in particularly useful in the Uxbridge Magistrates' Court.

□ Praise for the President of the Family Division shouldn't mean that judges are above criticism, despite the views of Lord Hailsham who this week deplored 'abusive speeches and snide remarks' about the judiciary. Worse still 'bitter jokes, unheard of until recently have been hurled against our judges.' Oh, dear. If only judges were as faultless, stainless, and emotionless as computers, if cases were fed in at one end and the answer came out at the other, then Lord Hailsham might have a point.

The truth is that our law is administered by human beings as insecure, dominated by their childhood, and alarmed at their own sexuality as the rest of us. Almost any case can be decided two ways and most acts of judgment involve feeling what you want to do and then clothing your instincts in legal garments. Very often judges' instincts are decent, sensible and humane but when they're not everyone should be entitled to say so.

What interests me about Lord Hailsham's remarks is how sensitive everyone is becoming to criticism. After a lifetime of writing you become hardened to the regular visit to the newsagents, to opening everything from the *Financial Times* to the *Sun* with trembling fingers, to being warmed by approval or sloshed across the face with an icy bucketful of 'bitter jokes' and 'snide remarks'. No one else appears to tolerate this - even restaurateurs have recently become hysterical when aspersions are cast on the lobster quenelles, or on their ludicrous habit of throttling their customers with ties. But if playwrights must be criticised why on earth should a Chief Justice or a chef be immune? Bad notices are, after all, a risk you take when you go into show business.

□ Criticism, like the weather, is a fact of life; but thank god I'm not an opera singer. At *Rigoletto* the tenor attempted a new cadenza in 'Donna e mobile', hit a high D and then came skidding off the road like a nasty accident at Brand's Hatch. The Covent Garden audience booed and for good measure they also gave the bird to the conductor whose work had been faultless. Opera is surely the most merciless of sports, like bull fighting and all-in wrestling. No one boos the actor at Stratford who gets the beat of the blank verse wrong (and there are plenty) and even I would draw the line at a judge saying 'I pronounce for the plaintiff with costs' being greeted with 'Boo!' 'Get off the stage!' 'Go suck a lozenge!' etc from the claque in counsel's benches.

□ Sir Bernard Docker is dead, and gone that moment when the grey austerity of the post-war Labour Government which went with bread rationing, snoek, and Stafford Cripps forever tightening his belt, became lit with the gleam of the Docker's gold-plated, zebra-lined Daimler. When there was trouble about breaches of the currency restrictions on their yacht 'Shemara' the ex-Labour attorney, Sir Hartley Shawcross, doffed his red tie and became known as the 'Dockers' QC'. We knew then that the brave new world promised by J. B. Priestley on the wireless was over. The good old days were back again with Paul Getty and Onassis and Adnan Kashoggi. Now that Sir Bernard, after a long period of vegetation, is dead in Bognor, what a nice square old millionaire he seems to us to have been.

□ One unexpected delight of growing old is that what you remember as yesterday becomes a subject of wonder-struck nostalgia to the young. Talking to David Hare about his remarkable and undervalued play 'Plenty', a work suffused with the glamour of such historic events as the fall of France and the Festival of Britain, he looked at me with a new respect when I told him I had once worked for the Ministry of Information and that I could remember barrage balloons. No doubt he will remember me for that, just as I think of Victor Russell, a long dead divorce barrister, solely as someone whose grandfather was lifted up as a child to see Napoleon in Portsmouth Harbour on his way to St Helena.

□ To the House of Lords for leave to appeal in the blasphemy case. The committee room is off a long passage hung with TV sets which announce the events in the Chamber. Having heard argument their Lordships wished to confer. As we were firmly escorted into the corridor to await the outcome of their deliberations, I looked up at the TV. God was in the tube that day, and on the screen appeared the simple words 'Prayers have started'.

□ When will the English stop hitting their children? Sickening revelations of ritual bullying by London schoolmasters came at the same time that I heard teachers unable to answer the simplest general knowledge questions, and the story of a friend whose son was made to write out 'bicycle' 20

times, a word the tactless lad had made the mistake of spelling correctly.

No doubt there will be tumultuous applause on 'Any Questions' for anyone defending the schoolmaster's right to take violence off the streets and into the classroom.

□ I'm sorry that women's liberation should have lost the battle for El Vino's bar, mainly because I'm exasperated by the insolent way pub owners feel they can control their customer's lives, insist on them dressing as bank managers (why on earth can't you drink a bottle of Chateau Fleet Street without wearing a tie?) and segregate them sexually. All the same if we are to have real sexual equality I have no doubt that women will have to sacrifice some of their more outrageous privileges. Would they agree, for instance, to an equal risk of the nick for sexual offences? Apart from the all-male crime of rape, if two 15-year-olds sleep together the boy has committed a crime and the girl not. A woman can't be convicted for the offence of having sex with a mental defective (although many will claim they do so) while a man can. Lesbians are free of all the legal restrictions which bug gentleman gays. The divorce law seems lately to have become a hotbed of sexual discrimination. I know a man in the garment trade who, having found his wife in bed with two musicians, was quaintly puzzled when the law required him to present her with a third of his capital and income, plus a third of the matrimonial home.

John Mortimer

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard

□ A coloured American airman has complained to the commander of a base in Britain about the use of the term 'black ice'. The airman heard the term used on his station's weather forecast soon after he arrived in Britain, and made an anonymous telephone call to the commander of the United States Airforce base at Chicksands, Beds. He said the term was derogatory. The airman is one of 200 coloured personnel out of the station's 1,300. - *Daily Telegraph* (E. Newhouse)

□ The rival units have agreed certain basic rules to control their broadcasting. 'We have promised MPs we won't use any of their speeches in comedy programmes', said Mr Peter Hardiman Scott, chief assistant to the BBC's director-general, at a press conference today. *Evening News* (R. Vick)

□ The Tory candidate Mr Ian Lawson, who is well to the Right of the party, is against abortion, arguing for the 'sanctity of life'. He has also promised to fight for the reintroduction of capital punishment. - *Guardian* (Tim Mehelsea)

□ It seems surprising that burns in a sauna bath are so rare, but this is perhaps because people getting into difficulties in a sauna usually die. - *British Medical Journal* (A. Gramer)

First Person

Arthur Marshall

By Jupiter

Alerted at dawn by sharp military rappings on my door, I spent the morning of my 30th birthday on May 10, 1940, in Lille in N.E. France preparing for the fray and by the evening I was in Belgium. A thirtieth birthday seemed at the time to be one of the more traumatic of life's milestones and Hitler, who plainly knew that it was my birthday and was determined at all costs to be irritating, chose that very day for invading the Low Countries and so various festivities most kindly arranged for me which were to centre round luscious French food and rich wines had to be abandoned. *C'était la guerre*. I do not now recall what my horoscope for the day announced but it was probably, as is the way with most horoscopes, something both informative and comforting: 'A quiet day for taking stock of yourself. Romance may be hovering in the offing, so strive to control the moodiness that has been bothering you lately. Keep your social life flexible. If you have green fingers, today, with the risk of frost almost gone, is ideal for planting out those geraniums. Lightly fork over your tilth, mulch thoroughly and get going!' The streets of Lille were full, not of tilth but of agitated Frogs filling up their Citroëns with petrol, strapping mattresses to the roofs and manifestly dead nuts on getting going in any direction that wasn't east. German aeroplanes had already been over to take a peck at what was afoot below and a leaden despair was in the air. Plucky little Napoleon wouldn't have known which way to look.

During the war that followed, London and the blitz were greatly enlivened by those marvellous Alan Melville revues at the Ambassadors Theatre featuring Hermione Gingold. In one of these, she appeared, with a friend, as an old and somewhat slatternly evacuee lady perched on a country seat and messily munching sandwiches extracted from her gas-mask case. Asked by the friend when her birthday was, she gave the date and was then told 'Ah, that makes you a Virgo.' To which Miss Gingold replied, in those rich brown and sepulchral tones that sound as though her vocal cords had for years been marinated in Guinness, 'Does it? That's clever of it!' Nowadays we are all apt to know already whether we are a Leo or a Pisces and are familiar with the technical lingo that accompanies our various birthday predictions and which often appears to be so very unseemly: 'Mercury and Jupiter conjunct in Uranus, while Gemini is lodged in Venus, planet of love and your solar twelfth house. Tread warily today. You will visit acquaintances and have fun in a friendly and informal way'. Oh dear. Informal fun, I fear, and as far as my Devon life is concerned can only mean ping-pong in the Bultitudes' rumpus room, with pot luck to follow, Giles doing the

honours ('Another banger anybody?') in a funny apron with jokes to match.

I rather regret the disappearance of the Victorian birthday books popular well into this century and in which friends' birthday dates were carefully written down for future action. Each day contained some quotation, chosen apparently totally at random and frequently of a tremendously depressing nature. Turning excitedly to May 10, I am at once slapped down with 'The gates of hell are open night and day' or 'Change and decay in all around I see'. Or it might be the cheery Rossetti poem 'Does the road wind up-hill all the way? Yes, to the very end.' In some birthday books, it wasn't merry passages so much as Interesting Facts of the 'Typhoon in Fiji' kind. Here again May 10 is a bit of a sell (Outbreak of Indian Mutiny).

Birthdays and the presents and festivities that accompany them take different people different ways. To Linda Rannells Lewis and her book, appropriately called *Birthdays* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, £5.75), I owe the information that at Presbyterian Sunday Schools in West Virginia, any child so ill-advised as to have a birthday had to stand up, stiff with embarrassment, and say:

I must be good and glad and gay
For I'm a birthday child today.

Queen Victoria, ever one to set the pace and once at a bit of a loss as to what to give

Roger Woddiss

The Platitudes of David Selkirk

'What lie before us are great and complex problems, which viewed differently are also opportunities.' - David Steel, *The Times*, 29 May.

I am solemn in all that I say,
My gravity none would dispute,
And from what I have written today
You can see why they call me astute.
O platitudes! Where is the glint
Of glamour in being profound?
Better waffle through columns of print
Than fasten my feet to the ground.

I am filled with a passion to preach,
And determined to go it alone;
I am bored by another man's speech,
And thrill to the sound of my own.
The problems before us are great,
The size of my brain is quite small;
The sum of my thoughts on page eight
Is exactly the half of damn-all.

one of her granddaughters to mark the occasion of the girl's sixteenth birthday, hit on the ideal present and parcelled up and sent off a bust of her dead mother and a collection of illustrations of funerals that she had attended, just the thing to set a teenager's pulses racing. On the other hand, the Queen herself was far from pleased to receive from her eldest son nothing but a rather ordinary table from Ireland, scene of the first of what was to be a sensational series of sexual misdemeanours ('Oh! Bertie alas! alas!'). Poor old Job wasn't, for obvious reasons, too keen on birthdays ('Why died I not in the womb?', or something), but little Lord Fauntleroy on the contrary was delighted to see throngs of tenants turning up and flags flying from the castle turrets. 'Is it because they like me, Dearest?' the little beast wistfully asked his mother, a woman much too lacking in maternal solicitude to give him a stinging blow in the face.

I recently gave at 'Myrtlebank' a small tea-party - icy cold and drenching rain and the fire had to be lit. While the tea (Earl Grey or Typhoo) and the viands (cucumber sandwiches, a heaped plateful of rather battered garibaldis and two kinds of cake) were circulating both without and within, I thought it might be agreeable to divert the guests by telling them with whom they shared birthdays. For example, Miss Entwhistle, born on February 3, shared it with Gertrude Stein, Mendelssohn and Hughie Green. It was also the day in which John of Gaunt died but none of this information seemed to give her any pleasure. Indeed, she looked extremely startled. And so it was with some of the others. Canon Mountjoy (April 20), finding himself linked up thereby with Mohammed, Harold Lloyd and Hitler, retired smartly into his shell and muttered what can only have been a hasty string of prayers. Mrs Mountjoy (May 26) fared a little better with The Venerable Bede, Queen Mary and Al Jolson, though Al Jolson had to be explained to her. My Cousin Madge (April 29), was, as usual, triumphant with Wellington, Duke Ellington, Jeremy Thorpe, Beecham and Emperor Hirohito. But then back we went into gloom by finding that Bunty Bultitude (Giles was either out on the links or killing something: I forget which) was teamed up with James Joyce, Nell Gwynne and Havelock Ellis, all of which, apart from Miss Gwynne, had to be explained to Mrs Mountjoy.

There are some very jolly birthday trios about. Take March 20 - Michael Redgrave, Ovid and Vera Lynn. What could be cosier? Or August 4, - Shelley, Harry Lauder and the Queen Mother. On September 7 we find Elizabeth I, Edith Sitwell and Grandma Moses. One of the most bizarre couplings occurs on February 6 (Marlowe, Queen Anne and Freddy Trueman), only rivalled by April 2 (Charlemagne, Casanova and Alec Guinness). Let astrologers, or whatever, make of those what they can.

There is, however, one birthday trio that silences all opposition and is so much above all others in interest and brilliance that the rest of us (I am matched with Fred Astaire and Thomas Lipton) must hang our heads. It is December 15. Just the three names. Beethoven, Noël Coward and Jane Austen. Beat that if you can!

Letters to the Editor

Marshall's Names

Sir, While househunting a few years ago I encountered estate agents named

Waite and Waite
Giddy and Giddy
Fox, Reason and Tickle

Forest Row
Sussex

DORIS DAVY

Hitlerwave

Sir, The film which young people in Germany are queuing to see at the moment is not Fest's *Hitler, A Career* (NS 10 May), but *Deutschland im Herbst*, a collection of pieces by six directors on the events of last autumn – the Schleyer kidnapping, the Mogadishu raid, the Stammheim suicides, and so on. The implications of this film are if anything even more disturbing: partly, like Fest's, on the grounds of selectivity and presentation; partly in its depiction of the continuity of institutions, personalities, and above all of attitudes, between the old and the new Germanies.

The present situation in West Germany is in some ways less and in some ways more alarming, and certainly more complex, than that portrayed in Gitta Sereny's article. I think she is too pessimistic about the 'Hitler-wave'. After all, as she has shown, young people do not seem to be taken in by the spurious glamour of Hitler's Germany: in the discussion which she records, the initial admiration and sympathy for Hitler as depicted by Fest was succeeded by scepticism, and by some acute criticisms of the film-maker's methods. This may be due, as Speer suggests, to their 'unfailing moral judgment', or to the fact that they are not so ignorant of modern German history as many Germans believe. Though the Hitler era may well be skated over in school history lessons, as it has been in the past, there is an emphasis on the more positive aspects of recent history (Liebknecht and Luxemburg as well as Stresemann) in school radio broadcasts, and on political education in general, which makes most young people at least as articulate, politically and historically, as their British counterparts and, I suspect, enables them to form their own opinions on the aspects inadequately covered by the curriculum.

The media, furthermore, take a far from neutral line in reporting the latest excrescences of Nazi behaviour. A recent music and chat programme of the Radio 2 type made no secret of its distaste in its coverage of an SS veterans' rally at Nassau over Whitsun: the maudlin and vicious rhetoric of the SS orators themselves was damning enough; then the announcer ended by pointing out that this particular division had been responsible for the massacre at Oradour.

They are more equivocal, however, when it comes to the less obvious survivals from the Nazi past in West German society – the fact, for example, that Schleyer was not merely 'a symbol of Himmler' but a former member of the SS. Here *Deutschland im Herbst* provides a corrective. It shows what the interminable television reports did not (and does so with far more wit and profundity than is present in Syberberg's turgid works): the political and economic elites closing ranks in vulgar homage to the sacrificial victim (Esso banners at half mast; blown-up photographs of Schleyer and a three-minutes' silence among the *Gastarbeiter* at the Mercedes-Benz factory). We also see the poignant funeral of the three

terrorist suicides, with the obligatory police baton charge; and above all the marvellous exchange between Fassbinder and his mother, where the suppressed longing of the older generation (and also of the younger, Fassbinder seems to suggest) for a benevolent, authoritarian father-figure is finally forced to the surface.

The trouble with modern Germany, declares a radical intellectual and convicted terrorist from his prison cell elsewhere in the film, is that German fascism was defeated militarily in 1945, but not politically and socially. A film like *Deutschland im Herbst* cannot fail to make young people (and only young people, for nobody over thirty seems ever to set foot inside a German cinema) more critical of the society in which they live, but also less susceptible to the nostalgic appeal of the 'Hitler-wave'.

That, on the other hand, such a film can be shown in Germany, and that a prisoner is allowed to express his opinions in front of the camera at all – which strikes a British viewer as unlikely to be tolerated by the Home Office here – are indications that alongside the unreconstructed Germany there exists a political system in many ways more liberal than our own. But then we don't have the *Berufsverbot* . . .

The 'Hitlerwave', as Gitta Sereny suggests, is nasty, disturbing and commercially-inspired. I also have the feeling – and I hope I'm not wrong – that it is receding. Even if it is not, it does not call for 'much sharper self-censorship': the Germans are quite capable of coming up with effective methods of fighting it.

PATRICK SALMON

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Sir, For the first time reading the NEW STATESMAN since my teens (I am now 31) I cried reading an article. This was my response to 'Facing up to the new Hitlerwave' in Germany by Gitta Sereny. What brought the tears was the way Dachau concentration camp was explained to the young Germans visiting it.

In 1961 I was 15 and in Bremerhaven, North Germany on a school exchange. The Eichmann trial was on TV heralded by a sinister roll of drums and the Nazi emblem. At a civic reception the mayor on the day commemorating the July Plot against Hitler's life thanked us British for defeating them in the war.

The young Germans I knew then were idealistic and friendly with no trace of authoritarian attitudes. They were puzzled by the past and shy of it. As the mayor of Bremerhaven thanked us for winning the war, we must remember that the Allies (including Russia) are the trustees of the German conscience and the Godfathers of the spiritual and moral future of young Germany. Let us never have to do Germany the favour, at vast cost, of defeating it again.

WILLIAM HANLEY

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Sir, Gitta Sereny, (NS 19 May) investigating the new 'Hitlerwave' in Germany, seems to have got lots of friends over here. What apparently she has not got and badly needs is a copy of the German *Who's Who*. Winifred is not 'Richard Wagner's 80-year-old daughter'. She is his daughter-in-law, British-born Winifred Williams, who married Wagner's son Siegfried. Wagner's daughter Eva, on the other hand, married in 1908 another British subject,

About Oxford books!

Verse and worse

The New Oxford Book of Light Verse
Is elegant, witty and terse
From Shakespeare to Lear
It's full of good cheer
That New Oxford Book of Light Verse

It will be published next Thursday at £4.25. It's edited by Kingsley Amis; the choice reflects his tastes and views, and its main objective – to raise a good-natured smile – is achieved pretty frequently, we think. Amis's predecessor, W. H. Auden, defined 'light verse' as the minor work of major writers, and his *Oxford Book of Light Verse*, published in 1938, was as a result perhaps not quite so light-hearted as this new one. More than 250 poems by some 80 authors (assiduous Anon. apart) provide a witty and consistently entertaining survey of English verse, from Rochester and Ben Jonson to Anthony Powell and Sir Osbert Sitwell by way of Thackeray, Gilbert, and Hilaire Belloc.

Town and gown

. . . As we were leaving he hinted
That a student could hardly do worse
Than see how the volumes were printed
At the time-honoured Clarendon Press.
So I went there with scholarly learning
and I gathered from kind Mr. Gell,
Some books were to stimulate learning,
And some were intended to sell. . . .

There is quite a bit of light verse too – and more than a few smiles, good natured and otherwise – in Jan Morris's new anthology, *The Oxford Book of Oxford*, published last week at £5.95. Oxford has few more eloquent or evocative champions than Jan Morris: she delights in its beauty, its boisterousness, its tolerance, its long tradition of eccentricity. These qualities are all amply reflected in her new book, which traces the history of the University from the Middle Ages to modern times, combining extracts from contemporary observers with her own linking commentary. Dons and undergraduates, scholars and reformers, and all the great Oxford characters spring to life in a book which will delight everyone already familiar with the University, and serve as the perfect introduction for those who come to it for the first time: for them, a double treat is in store.

Jan Morris's *Oxford* has become a classic account of the character, history, mores, buildings, climate, and people of an uncategorizable city. It describes the Oxford which gave the world the MG sports car as well as the Oxford which educated twenty-two British Prime Ministers. We've just brought out a new edition (£6, Oxford Paperbacks £2.50) which brings up to date the portrait of the small city which has given its name to a marmalade, bags, shoes, a Group, a Movement, a dictionary, and an accent.

Houston Stewart Chamberlain, who, by his famous book *Die Grundlagen des XIX. Jahrhunderts* and by his following books *Race and Nation* and *Race and Personality*, laid the foundations of Hitler's racist theories. You see that, to paraphrase Thomas Browne 'investigation begins at home' and that it all started long before Sir Oswald Mosley.

KARL HILDEBRAND

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Germany

IBM Replies

Sir, Your issue of 12 May carried a story by Duncan Campbell entitled 'Resisting IBM: The Politics of the Great Computer War'. As it pertains to IBM that story is inaccurate in the extreme. I shall not attempt to address all the errors and misstatements, but would like to rebut the following specific errors:

- 1) That IBM ran a campaign called 'Project Knock-Off' which used discounting to win computer users away from a specific competitive supplier and that this campaign was revealed in anti-trust litigation involving IBM. That is untrue and, incidentally, IBM does not offer such discounts. The only reference we know of to such a campaign was in Rex Malik's book about IBM which we hold to be a work largely of fiction.
- 2) That files are kept by IBM on every journalist who contacts the company, fanciful, but also sheer nonsense.
- 3) That IBM subsidiaries repatriate all profits to the US. False. In fact over the last five years the retained earnings of IBM UK amount to £85.5m. and the IBM corporation's annual report for 1977 on page 25 states that: 'Undistributed earnings of Non-US subsidiaries included in consolidated retained earnings at 31 December 1977 amounted to \$4,123m.' These earnings are indefinitely re-invested in Non-US operations. Total IBM investment in the UK over the past five years amounts to £290.9m.
- 4) That prior to the ACAS ballot on the issue of union recognition in March 1977 the company undertook a 'terrific internal propaganda campaign'. Hardly. IBM prepared two video cassettes over a 12 month period to inform employees of the company's position on the unions'

claim for recognition and IBM's belief in its established grievance procedures. Video cassettes have been regularly used for employee communications within IBM for the past four years.

It would seem that by any reasonable standard Mr Campbell's article suffers from too many errors and too little fact.

E. R. NIXON
Managing Director

IBM UK Ltd
PO Box 41
North Harbour
Portsmouth

Duncan Campbell writes: Mr Nixon may choose to hold Rex Malik's account of IBM to be a work largely of fiction, but he is not actually denying its accuracy.

In the accounting sense, Mr Nixon may be right in saying that IBM (UK) does not repatriate all profits to the US. That matters not a whit. IBM (UK) is wholly owned, and all 'retained' profits simply increase local investment and the consequent value of IBM stock to investors in the United States. The investment also generates further surplus which may indeed be 'retained' or returned to US investors. In no sense do IBM profits remain in the UK for local benefit.

I repeat that, prior to the ACAS ballot on union recognition, IBM undertook a terrific internal propaganda campaign which resulted in an overwhelming vote against unionisation. So powerful was the internal propaganda in besmirching the union's activities that some union members resigned whilst other publicly disclaimed their membership.

W. H. Auden

Sir, I am engaged in writing a biography of W. H. Auden, and would be grateful to hear from any of your readers who have information relating to Auden, or reminiscences they may be willing to share.

CHARLES OSBORNE

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The World Goes On

Sir, Your article 'The Rich Rewards of Socialist Electronics' (NS 26 May) is the best contribution I have seen for some time to the theory of how private enterprise works in a modern

mixed economy: and it is not spoilt, rather enlivened, by the egalitarian sourness with which you describe developments. What is evident is that the authorities concerned with trying to establish this country in the key field of micro-processors have concluded that they cannot attract the necessary experts without letting them make large personal fortunes. The 'brain drain' must be reversed, in this key area, by creating a new set of rich people such as socialists are dedicated to dispossess. No wonder the Left has 'ethical anxieties' which are 'not quite expunged' even by the prospect of creating employment. The argument that successful entrepreneurs create employment as they make their money is one the Left in particular has devoted great attention to refuting.

As you rightly imply, too, the practice is not new. The computer firm ICL is Tony Benn's one big practical success; he puts in the public money necessary to keep it going and transmute it from the lamest of ducks to a very successful company. Why does he not boast about this? Because, I suspect, of the other factor which was necessary, besides money, namely Geoffrey Cross. You, too, say Mr Cross's example is 'not entirely happy'. The fact remains that in allowing an equity interest to Mr Cross, the authorities may have enriched him, but they saved the British taxpayer, directly and indirectly, a great deal more. If they had put in some dreary bureaucrat the company would either not exist, or be a large drain on public funds.

So the answers to your questions are: yes, probably the proposed arrangements for micro-processing would mean that 'executives in State-backed enterprises . . . would . . . demand lucrative shareholdings' in their concerns. Including the British National Oil Corporation. And the psychological effect of establishing 'such a sharply discontinuous system of rewards' would be that the top men would concentrate on maximising profit for themselves and the taxpayer rather than on multiplying their subordinates.

The fact is that the spread of socialist assumptions, while not creating a new man with new motivations, has indeed created a new set of conditions within which the old Adam has to operate. Unions and tax-collectors can reduce owners' power over tangible property and their benefit from it. But when the property is in a man's brain, he can make his own terms. Short of a Berlin wall, you must buy him at the price he will fetch. And so the world goes on.

JONATHAN GUINNESS

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War and Warning

Sir, Frank Allaun's exposure of Cameron's War raises the worldwide question of how long it is going to be before the enemy is identified with deprivation? As prelude to the Special Session on Disarmament opening on May 28, the United Nations have recently published relevant data. It appears that the likely cost of the 1,200 British built tanks which are now to be supplied to Iran could provide 20 million illiterate children with schoolroom equipment. A tank costing £250,000 to construct evidently deprives 16,000 children of education. Educationally speaking, therefore, every tank supplied to the third world or, for that matter, anywhere else, mutilates 16,000 children. The inference of both Cameron's War and Cameron's Warning is that of the advocacy of mutual mutilation. For the human race's sake, militatologically we have to be on guard.

ED LEWIS

Northcase Lodge
Rodmell, Lewes
Sussex

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Craig Raine

The Pains of Sleep

Henry's Fate by JOHN BERRYMAN *Faber* £2.75

Autumn to Autumn by A. ALVAREZ *Macmillan* £3.95 and £2.95

Poems and Prose 1949-1977 by HAROLD PINTER *Eyre Methuen* £6

In his famous essay, 'Beyond the Gentility Principle' (1962), A. Alvarez announced that 'the great moderns experimented not just to make it new formally, but to open poetry up to new areas of experience'. The implicit image, that of the poet as explorer, is typically rugged, but the proposition itself is uncontroversial. Poets have been making things new for a long time. To take a trivial example, Cowper's *The Task* begins with the deliberate comic shock of 'I sing the SOFA' – signalling a greater poetic inclusiveness. More seriously, Wordsworth's *Prelude* is a great innovative poem of psychology, while his 'Preface' to *Lyrical Ballads* foresaw a time when the poet would 'be ready to follow the steps of the Man of Science' – a prediction realised (alas) in Tennyson's *The Princess*, with its 'shale and hornblende, rag and trap and tuff'. Baudelaire, in his art criticism, was anxious for a painter to show 'how great and poetic we are in our cravats and patent-leather boots': in the end, it was a feat he managed himself, earning the praise of Eliot for discovering a wholly contemporary imagery that was capable of the highest intensity. Poetry, then, is a suitcase that constantly aspires to the condition of a trunk. In proclaiming this, Alvarez was in good company.

But what, in 1962, were the 'new areas' to be? Genocide, death camps, the psychology of evil? Alvarez gestured in these directions yet, sensibly, flinched away from any final prescriptiveness, even at the cost of some polemical bathos: 'what poetry needs, in brief, is a new seriousness.' All pretence of theoretical rigour thus abandoned, Alvarez argued from examples. Berryman was a leading exponent of what he had in mind – a poet of increasing variety, inclusiveness and interest. Suicide, alcoholism, fame, fatherhood, bereavement and even diarrhoea are some of his subjects:

poor Henry,
with all this gas & shit blowing through it
four times in 2 hours, his tail ached.

Just the same, it's mildly ironical that Alvarez's nominee for the 'new seriousness' should be a poet whose favoured mode proved so often to be humorous and clowning – so much so, in fact, that Lowell singled it out in his last book, *Day by Day*:

Just the other day,
I discovered how we differ – humour . . .
It's an over-generous judgment that wasn't

always true. However mechanically rhetorical Lowell could be on occasion, he was delicately humorous in his greatest, pioneering book, *Life Studies*. There, describing his father's 'sensationally sober' Chevrolet, he dispenses some accurate banter:

The local dealer, a 'buccaneer',
had been bribed 'a king's ransom'
to deliver quickly a car without chrome.

Commander Lowell's harmless hyperbole reaches us sprigged with tenderly teasing inverted commas.

Berryman's humour was of a different kind, self-absorbed and more rumbustiously ironical: 'Legman assman bustman, abominable Henry.' The urgent sexual preferences dispense with the polite pauses of punctuation. In effect, Berryman had only one subject – himself – and even during the Forties when he was dutifully writing public-Audenesque, his diaries were crammed with pages of self-analysis. Some readers find Berryman's egotism claustrophobic and it's true he can be repetitive on the subject of fatherhood (Little Twiss muttering Latin on the steps of Smith and Vassar) and ignorance (the unread *Ubu Roi*, for example). Nevertheless, as Tennyson noted of *Maud's* mad narrator, 'different phases of passion in one person take the place of different characters'. Berryman was various and knew it, sometimes as an affliction:

Cross am I sometimes with my
little daughter:
fill her eyes with tears. Forgive me, Lord.
Unite my various soul,
sole watchman of the wide & single stars.

This is from a prayer in *Love and Fame*, one of a series generally reckoned to be unsuccessful. The objections are that the humour is misplaced and brash, the reverence tritely formulaic, the vision of God negligible beside Berryman's own omnipresence. But although the religious poetry is uneven, every poem has its vivid moments and there are some totally achieved prayers where the humour and the reverence complement each other perfectly:

Holy, as I suppose I dare to call you
without pretending to know anything
about you . . .

Prayer, a distinct sub-category of religious poetry, suits Berryman because its traditional blend of praise and request accommodates his egotism. In prayer, God never has our undivided attention and Berryman's praise is always refreshingly opinionated: 'endower of Earth so gorgeous & different from the boring Moon . . .' Here, within a single line, the cheek qualifies the reverence and vice versa, but elsewhere the qualification can work across the whole poem, redeeming lines that, taken out of con-

text, might seem either trite or brash.

This latest, posthumous volume of unpublished work is, on the whole, inferior. Yet it has moments of wild comedy and terror that stay in the mind:

He slept longer than usual:
one cliff he had to descend, clinging to mosses,
woke him though.

Berryman has always been an expert on the pains of sleep. There are, too, moments of eloquence like this terminal sunset: 'the sun burned down . . .' *Henry's Fate* is a timely reminder of Berryman's skills – the convoluted demotic that derives from Hopkins, the daring promiscuity of tragedy and farce, the ability to open up 'new areas of experience'.

After Berryman's formidable directness and prodigal gifts, reading the poetry of A. Alvarez and Harold Pinter is like being whisked away from a banquet and plunged into a world of austerity – poetry aspiring to the condition of a ration book. Alvarez tries to fulfil his own inclusive prescription but succeeds only superficially. His poems, written between 1953 and 1976, attempt intimate, difficult subjects – suicide, sexual jealousy, abortion, the onset of age, failed love. Mostly, though, Alvarez can include this experience only by treating it obliquely and euphemistically. Even the abortion is sentimentalised: 'You vanished. Later came violence.' 'Violence' tells us more about Alvarez's guilt than the fact of surgery, and the quaint scraps of dialogue are equally literary: 'I bleed still', the girl is supposed to have said, rather than 'I'm still bleeding'.

Alvarez recently disclosed that, while reading *Bleak House* in 1964, he realised for the first time that literature was about pleasure – not technique or the search for identity or any other critical formula. 'It was like Saul on the road to Tarsus.' I find this disarming admission at once courageous and damaging. It throws, moreover, a flood of light on his poetry, most of which was written before the revelation. We are a long way from pleasure of any kind in *Autumn to Autumn* because the critical police are out in strength. Accordingly, little is risked and nothing achieved beyond the habitual resort to a timid, moody pastoral which excludes the ostensible subject. As Mrs Gradgrind says, 'I think there's a pain somewhere in the room' – but finding it in these poems is like looking for a hypodermic in a haystack. They are thin not trim, dull not austere.

Not so the early poems of Harold Pinter, as he was known when he published fraudulent imitations of Dylan Thomas in *Poetry London*:

Now in the quaver of a roisty bar, the
wansome lady
I blust and stir,
Who pouts the bristle of a sprouting fag.

You can't get more inclusive than that. It's like being offered a sweet and carrying off a brawling cluster of liquorice allsorts. Pinter, though, quickly realised that this chaotic, barely intelligible prodigality was not his metier. The later poems, more characteristically, offer very little beyond the rustling of an empty paper bag. I confess I understood very few of these poems, but those which aren't written by the Pinter encoding-machine hardly persuade one to persevere.

John Fuller

Love Perhaps

The Cost of Seriousness by PETER PORTER
Oxford £2.50

The cost of seriousness, in the title-poem of Peter Porter's new collection, is death – that supreme fact in whose shadow words become 'forgettable objects'. This paradox makes poetry the more meaningless as it is more serious:

words trying to help, Mallarmé-like,
undefine themselves and say
things out of the New Physics: self-destruct!

The death of his wife in 1974 has compelled Porter in many of these poems to confront the paradox directly. It's true that old meditative and discursive habits find him developing it to investigate further the general predicament of poets explored in his last book, *Living in a Calm Country* (one of his best, a hard book to follow), but in a newer vein he searches here for a simplicity which will convincingly validate the seriousness. The book is, however, no less varied than usual, and it is possibly comforting to find him beginning it with a poem in a more routine key about an old-fashioned marquee wedding (owing too much to Larkin: 'After this huge/Joke, a terrible deluge/ The speeding innocents know nothing of'). Usually his poems avoid anything like a trite analysis of his subject by a mercurial shift of focus, a dislocation of argument, a kind of conceptual imagism. The directness of this set-piece at least gives the reader a standard by which to judge the much finer directness of 'The Delegate' or 'The Easiest Room in Hell', which employ a more painful and groping assertion of summary truths.

In this most difficult area he seems to me most widely accessible, but it is in general true that Porter is one of those poets who wears his culture on his sleeve. There was a forcible reminder of poetry's alien stance on a television book-programme a few weeks ago, when a lady of elephantine literary insensitivity complained that Porter (and indeed Defoe and most of the writers she had been invited to criticise) was unreadable. It's true, I suppose, that if you don't read, a poet like Porter will appear to rub your nose in the fact (one poem typically refers to Anacreon, *Julius Caesar*, Carrington

and Rilke, another to Horace, Catullus, Baudelaire, Neruda, Auden, Meredith, Lope de Vega, Goethe, Schiller and Donne), but the truculence that converts ignorance into accusations of this kind is an unwelcome novelty on such an occasion, when you might imagine that an attempt would be made to promote the best poetry now being written. The *effort*, however, would have to be made. Lip-service gets nowhere.

In fact, Porter's poems stilt-walk with a difference: from his elevated position the poet's usual peeping into the Imaginary Museum becomes a confident and lingering look, and yet the tone is always so far from grandiloquent. The cultural perspectives are towering and the Italian shrines smoke with offerings: Tasso, Rome, Mozartian opera, quattrocento painters. And yet these aesthetic exempla emerge simply as the natural annotations of Porter's wide-ranging sensibility. They either nudge nor oppress us. The poet neither strides nor stumbles. The stilts move calmly, at gallery-pace. If it seems like tourism it is at least habitual, grave, inclusive and reflective. It acknowledges standards of excellence, the finest aesthetic embodiments of our experience.

So that although for a time London has been for Porter an 'international hiding-place', from which satire or analysis has seemed the likeliest strategy, a European stage has come to seem most natural for the enactment of a deeper kind of poetry. Not only, or not so much, as a shorthand for achievements that an expatriate has special reason to learn to respect, but as a touchstone for real lives that are the ones we really know. In 'Roman Incident', for example, exhausted after a night of quarrelling 'and making love/to make up quarrels and not quite/succeeding', the speaker finds renewal in his contemplation of Dosso Dossi's painting *Melissa* (she is the prophetic Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* who disenchanted all the forms metamorphosed on Alcina's island). An Eliotian irony is out of the question, though the speaker's reaction to the painting reinforces his awareness that we are trapped in the animals of our senses. He prays for liberation and rejoins his partner, now refreshed by sleep, for further sightseeing. The sense of the two worlds of art and love mutually enlightening one another is moving, and the compulsiveness of the quest totally convincing.

This is the penultimate poem in the book. The last one elaborately establishes a mysterious scenario for renewal:

But, as in a chorus by Euripides,
We speak of other instances – the nightingale

Among the lines of village washing,
The idiot with his windmill arms –
These are a species of true fiction
Which cities burned for or a river turned –
Give them to Helen for her civic rape
Or a Baptist figure scrambling ashore
To be Athens, Florence and the cliffs
of mind.

This suggests that the humble origins of culture require a dedication to some primal source of emotion, love perhaps. Porter does not name it, but the rest of the poem goes on to predicate it, referring to itself in the process as a 'sermon'. It is so only in a Horatian sense, and provides a characteristic (and distinctly more hopeful) culmination of the uncomfortable self-appraisal in this book. The change of programme required involves no religious sanction, but it still desperately needs the magic release of art.

Eric Korn

Follow that Script

America BC: Ancient Settlers in the New World by BARRY FELL *Wildwood House*
£6.50

That cool, slightly randy Yankee traveller John Stephens, who toured Mesoamerica in the 1840s buying up lost cities (when it came to it, the Mexicans refused to deliver), was impatient of theories of the Egyptian origin of Mayan temples:

the pyramidal form is one which suggests itself to human intelligence in every country as the simplest and surest mode of erecting a high structure upon a solid foundation. It cannot be regarded as a ground for assigning a common origin . . .

But common-sense can't extirpate diffusionism as long as people can't bear to believe that one idea couldn't happen twice. Here is Professor Barraclough Fell, a marine zoologist of impeccable scientific rectitude, classifier of the extinct echinoids of New Zealand; one gulp of the fatal potion and out slouches Barry Fell, epigrapher extraordinary, trampling evidence like Hyde stomping that defenceless female child. The deadly drug is the decipherment of mysterious inscriptions. Even the professional Hrozný, who unravelled Hittite, went linguistically bananas and published fantasy decipherments of Linear B, the Phaistos Disc, and Indus Valley writing (funnily, they all turned out to be Hittite); the success of Chadwick and Ventris suggests, wrongly, that any amateur had had a chance.

Fell uses scripts by the bucketload to support the engaging thesis that years before Madog, Celtic sailors made the great crossing, leaving Ogham inscriptions all over New England, and up and down the Mississippi Valley. Why Ogham in 1000 BC, which conventional wisdom confines to the British Isles, even pinpointing its origin to South Wales in the fourth century AD? Perhaps because Ogham is a simple



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system, code rather than alphabet, where each letter is represented by one to five strokes of different lengths and inclinations. Given a few variants (the 14th-century *Books of Ballymote* lists 70), and a little manipulation, upside-down or *boustrophedon*, hypothetical proto-celtic roots, omission of vowels and so on, the most unpromising material will bring forth abundantly. The green hills of Vermont and New Hampshire are sprinkled with dolmens, heretofore dismissed as colonial rootcellars, and their lintels are inscribed 'dedicated to Bel'. It's deflating to find that this comprises the three letters B-BL: B is a single upright stroke and L a pair of parallel strokes.

A few minutes fiddling with paper and pencil (what Jekyll-Fell would recognise as a control experiment) will show that any arrangement of four strokes can be read, one way or another, as B-BL except where the gap between the two middle strokes is less than the other two gaps, which on the null hypothesis will happen only a quarter of the time. The same four strokes can be read as HT, TH, B(or V)F, LL, S, MGM, GBH (truly) and more: a literature is beginning to emerge from these scratches. Long messages are scarcer, though a nice one from Monhegan Island, dated on stylistic grounds to the 6th century BC reads - in a different Ogham - LNGBT B FNC CDHH CL BD - 'Ships from Phoenicia. Cargo Platform' in old Goidelic. 'The occurrence of the supposedly Norse word long-bata, longboat,' remarks Fell happily, 'suggests that the Norsemen were abroad long before the Viking Age.'

Phoenicia? Well, Irish Celts are thought to come from Iberia, and a Norwegian linguist had brought back from Paraguay an inscription which turned out to be part Punic (in Iberian writing), part Ogham. Soon Punic-Ogham bilinguals were turning up everywhere: there is a lovely photograph of a sprightly oldster half hidden behind a heap of scrawled rocks (but the local museum has hidden his collection away). Ogham can be concealed in drawings or finger gestures: a Spanish rock-painting of a stag hunt conceals a message in tines and legs (however often I counted, I was left with an antler or two over), and the outstretched arms of funerary statuettes say QN (or 'ochone'!). Fell reads a letter on gold plates from Hiram, Prince of Tyre (it turns out to be simple Etruscan, which he briskly solves *en passant*), the lead lamina of Alcoy (previously suspected to be a forgery), the Pedra Lavrada inscription from Brazil (of which the original is now missing) and more, much more.

Nor have these travellers vanished without trace. The Pima language of Arizona is actually Semitic, as proved by taking an admittedly obscure creation hymn, discarding the translation, and hunting word-by-word for the nearest equivalent in a modern Arabic dictionary. (Among the 'semitic' roots Fell identifies in American texts are *aga*, which is Turkish, and *magus*, which is Persian.) Zuñi is shown to be identical with Libyan (first read by Fell in 1973, he says, though actually the writing was deciphered in the 19th century and the language is Berber). Micmac hieroglyphics, thought to have been invented by an 18th-

century Jesuit, are actually identical with Egyptian and there are astounding convergences of vocabulary: N.E. Algonkian *nadtow-wompu*, 'to inquire for news of' equals Egyptian *n-d w-p-w-t*, Algonkian *weksitlpaktesk* 'to bob up and down (fig)' equals Norse *fiske efter torsk*.

It is a lovely and recurrent fantasy that with so many languages in the world, two might be the same without anyone having noticed: I've been told of Cornishmen who could chat to Samaritans. It would take a congress of specialists a decade to undo Fell thoroughly, but even an ignoramus like myself in an ill-equipped library (I couldn't locate the sober-sounding *Occasional Papers of the Epigraphic Society*, in which Fell and disciples publish) can spot distortions, wishful thinking, the use of suspect material, of inappropriate dictionaries, the comparison of isolated words wrenched out of place, time and linguistic structure, enough actual inaccuracies (the Egyptian characters for 'Heaven', 'all', 'me', are not what he says; the spread hands that denote 'not' have been arbitrarily bent to resemble the Micmac sign, which is a split ring) to convince the reader that 10,000 times nothing is still nothing.

There is a style - ingratiating, immodest, overloaded with autobiography - which unmistakably identifies the pseudo-scholar, even one as benign and judicious as Professor Barraclough Fell: if only crank-art or crank-politics were so easily detectable.

Edward Mortimer

The Low Road

Eurocommunism and Socialism by FERNANDO CLAUDIN translated by John Wakeham *NLB* £5.50

Fernando Claudín was a leading member of the Spanish Communist Party from the time of the Civil War until 1964, when he was expelled for criticising the party's policies within Spain and its (then) uncritical attitude towards the Soviet Union. To a large extent the party has since appropriated attitudes for which they were condemned: they were 'Euro-communists' before the word acquired its recent currency.

That fact in itself lends considerable interest to Claudín's views on the official Eurocommunism of today. But some readers will also know him as the author of *The Communist Movement from Comintern to Cominform* (Peregrine Books 1975). In that book he developed the most thorough and credible exposition we are likely to get of the case against Stalin's policy in Western Europe at the end of World War II, as executed by Thorez and Togliatti. Significantly, his attack is an attack from the Left. The popular anti-fascist struggle could have been developed into a struggle to impose social-

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ism in France and Italy, he argues, as it was in Yugoslavia, had not the French and Italian CPs cooperated in restoring the capitalist state structures in accordance with Stalin's policy of dividing the postwar world into spheres of influence.

At first sight this is not a criticism one would expect to find associated with Eurocommunism, for the policies associated with Eurocommunism today seem much closer to the parliamentary road to socialism advocated by Thorez and Togliatti than they do to the people's war successfully waged by Tito. But in his new, much shorter book, Claudín explains the essence of Eurocommunism as he understands it: the democratic road to socialism is the only road, and socialism is not a negation of liberal democracy but rather an extension of it, 'democracy realised in the most complete manner'. Representative democracy should be complemented, not replaced, by direct democracy. Such elements of democracy as exist in capitalist society are not inherently bourgeois but have been 'won by the struggles of the working class and other sections of the masses'. Social Democracy, therefore, should be condemned 'not for its excess of democratic zeal, but for keeping it within the bounds prescribed by the bourgeoisie'. The Soviet system is not capitalist, but patently not democratic at any level, and therefore cannot be socialist either.

Claudín is well aware that the existing Eurocommunist parties fall short of this ideal in a number of respects. The French and Italian parties have so far refused, es-

entially for diplomatic reasons, to carry their argument to its logical conclusion and question the socialist nature of the Soviet system. 'So long as it retains its present conception,' Claudín writes, 'Eurocommunism will remain to some extent under Soviet hegemony; the hegemony not just of one of the world's two superpowers, but of a system which has already realised socialism' (his italics). Claudín also criticises all three of the major Eurocommunist parties for failing to democratise adequately their own internal mode of operation and for continuing to claim a special legitimacy for themselves as representatives of the working class and custodians of 'the scientific Marxist method': such claims, he says, are not only empirically unjustified but constitute an obstacle to the creation of the broad 'socio-political bloc' or alliance of parties and interest-groups which alone can mobilise a sufficient majority in favour of socialist change.

For Claudín continues to believe that such a change – a 'qualitative break' which, even though imposed by a legally elected government and supported by a clear majority of the population, will have to overcome every kind of resistance from the present ruling class – is an absolute necessity. For the third time this century, he says, Western Europe is confronted by the alternative between a decisive step forward into socialism or a relapse into barbarism and repression. It follows that his most serious criticism is reserved for the 'historic compromise' strategy of Berlinguer,

and it is essentially the same criticism that he levelled earlier at Togliatti: the PCI leadership is giving priority to advances within the existing state institutions over advances in 'the level and achievement of mass struggle'. It is thereby allowing the masses to be demoralised and divided, rather than preparing them for the decisive struggle ahead.

To seek a far-reaching agreement – a historic compromise – with the main political instrument of Italian capitalism, especially in conditions of economic crisis when capitalism needs to adopt policies that are clearly anti-working class, can only result in the PCI, and those union leaderships it influences, trying to tone down the aims and the methods of mass struggle, to restrict its demands for reform to the limits compatible with the system, to advocate these only at the level of propaganda without organising any real offensive to win them.

This of course is an argument already familiar on the Italian Left. It is not necessarily unanswerable, but it needs to be answered. The tide of change in Latin Europe has flowed strongly in favour of the Left in recent years. There are now alarming signs that, as a result of mistakes in the strategy of both communist and socialist parties, it may be beginning to turn. If that happens the consequences are likely to be very serious for the whole of Western Europe, including Britain. Many people on the British Left will have reservations about some of Claudín's ideas, but they certainly merit serious discussion.

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This English

Near-homophones are, no doubt, often the result of compositorial caprice (or of telephoned-in copy). But they are also so funny that I fear we shall be printing quite a few of them. Three this week, at any rate, followed by a nomad nominative. £3 for the first entry, £2 for the others printed. Paste entries on a postcard, please, and give full details of your source. We hardly need to add, do we, that the more eminent the sinner, the more gratified we are to record his failings?

□ . . . providing services, food and surroundings which are of a totally unsatisfactory quality, very poor value for money, and in inexorable taste. Gordon Corner *Evening Standard* (F. Huxley)

□ It occurred to my team in mid-afternoon when the opening partnership of Oakman and Smith had put on 240 without loss and my one fast bowler had carcked [sic] an ankle dropping the only catch of the day that I had aired. Wilfred Wooller (C. M. Brookes)

□ And the question: 'What do you call a man who's lucky in love?' illicit the inevitable reply: 'A bachelor.' Michael Billington *Guardian* (Freda Kirkman)

□ Mr Hattersley picked up a souvenir football and handed over 99p to a baffled cashier. He then introduced himself, which was then just as well because the girl had never heard of him or his Department before kicking the ball about the precinct with Mr Robertson as the cameras clicked. Peter Hetherington *Guardian* (John Abbott)

Maurice Richardson

Self-Slaughter

The Causes of Suicide by MAURICE HALBWACHS *Routledge* £7.75

The Morbid Streak by ANN DALLY *Wildwood House* £4.95

If Marx were reviewing Halbwachs he might tell you that 'the time has come to exchange the sociology of suicide for the suicide of sociology'. And indeed, the domain of self-slaughter – a term that was not used before the middle ages – bristles with contradictions. The act itself is so highly individual that it is difficult to think of statistical isolates performing it. *The Causes of Suicide* was first published in France in 1930. Until then the field had been dominated by Durkheim's magisterial *Suicide: a Study in Sociology* (1895). This, for the time being, had put a stop to the controversy among those who held that in the explanation of suicide psychological factors were more important than social ones. According to Durkheim, official statistics showed that the distributions of suicides in Europe could be precisely charted. He did admit that psychological investigation might complement sociological research, but in general he annexed suicide to sociology. He identified three types of suicide, depending on social conditions: altruistic suicide, typical of small scale traditional societies with a strong moral code; and egoistic and anomic suicides, both characteristic of large-scale developed societies in which social ties and moral norms were dissolving.

Halbwachs, a disciple of Durkheim, set out to bring him up to date in the light of recent statistics, but found him in need of more than revision. His book forms a bridge between the sociological and the psychological approach. He qualifies some of Durkheim's generalisations. For instance, it is true that suicide rates are lower among Catholics than among Protestants. Durkheim treated this as an isolated fact. Halbwachs points out that Catholic communities tend to be predominantly rural, while protestants are more urban, and modern urban civilisation is associated with a higher

suicide rate. There are other considerations. It is said that fewer Catholics commit suicide because their fear of hell is more intense than that of protestants. And psychoanalytically orientated observers suggest that the Catholic practice of confession is a built-in psychotherapeutic technique for relieving the pressure of guilt upon the ego and staving off the attacks of the super-ego which may end in self-destruction. In general Halbwachs revises Durkheim's classification and to some extent elaborates it, distinguishing neatly between types of approved suicide – martyrs, captains who go down with their ships. At the same time he comes down humanistically on the psychological side of the fence when he says: 'The state of terror and anguish is alone what matters. There is nowhere to go beyond it when one wishes to explain suicide.'

One of Halbwachs's statistical discoveries was that the social integration of European Jews into Christendom since 1879 coincided with an increase in their suicide rate. During World War I, he found that suicide rates diminished not only in the belligerent but also in the neutral countries. This was contrary to Durkheim's thesis that 'the egoistic disposition is submerged by wartime requirements for task-oriented, concerted activity in the face of the common enemy'. A further psychological explanation here is that any great increase in the general volume of human catastrophe gives the individual a licence to indulge his *schadenfreude*, diverting his aggression outwards – like the euphoria engendered among the innocent during a big school row.

The reader will find a mass of detailed information, whether about the relatively diminished rate of suicide among Hungarian widowers, or the tendency of English 19th-century suicides to go in more for drowning and less for hanging. Geography is one of Halbwachs's preoccupations. He attaches an almost mystical importance to it, and analyses the topographical features of Europe in minute particulars. He notes that suicides are much fewer in Surrey, which is near London, but far from the sea with its deleterious ports and has woods and hills, though he does not seem to take into account that a stock-exchange collapse could nullify the beneficial effects of the local alps. In the case of the low Welsh suicide rate, he is inclined to pay more attention to mountains than anthropology.

His low suicide-rate countries are Italy, Belgium, England and Norway; average rate: Austria, Sweden, and Bavaria; high: France, Prussia, Denmark and Saxony. In Italy the suicide rate increased as the murder rate declined. Halbwachs warns, however, that international comparisons are always suspect.

The rate of social change in the half-century since Halbwachs's book was published has been so rapid that many of his findings might seem to be of academic or historical interest only. The most significant general conclusion that emerges from his mass of statistics is that, between 1840 and 1877, the average rate of suicide increased by 64 per cent, and that from 1877 to 1913 the rate of increase dropped to 14 per cent. Despite the drop, he asks: 'Are all societies ill? Can a given society remain in a pathological state for three-quarters of a century?' (No prizes.)

For a practitioner of his *triste métier* Halbwachs is a quite lively writer and he is well aware of the tautologies and truisms with which his 'discipline' is beset. His own life ended tragically: he was arrested by the Gestapo in Paris in 1944 and died in Buchenwald. He has had to wait a long time to be translated into English. The job has been conscientiously performed by Harold Goldblatt. There is one notable omission from the bibliography and that is Romilly Fedden's learned and surprisingly entertaining essay 'Suicide' (Peter Davies 1938). This contains a rich variety of individual curiosities, among them the strange case of Matthew Lovat, the eccentric Anglo-Italian youth who (having first castrated himself) crucified himself with utmost mechanical ingenuity; and Aristotle's unhappy Oedipean stallion who galloped over a cliff after learning that he had covered his dam.

The Morbid Streak comes as a little prophylactic appendage. It is a brief, popular – but civilised, free from transatlantic blue-sky nonsense – study of destructive aspects of the personality. These are by definition pathological; yet as Dr Dally says, their milder manifestations are unavoidable in society. The problem is how to make use of them without endangering others. Some of her judgments could seem a bit harsh, but her stress on the need to tolerate paradox, and on Keats's 'negative capability' as one of the bases of imaginative activity, is perfectly sensible.

Elsa Morante

HISTORY

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The Jock Campbell New Statesman Award

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The Feeling of Onslaught

Adjudicating this Jock Campbell prize has not been easy. The field covered is large: the prize can in fact go to any work of literature, by an author born in Africa or the Caribbean, that has been published in the three years up to the end of 1977. And though the scope is narrowed to 'new or unregarded talent', and so must exclude the V.S. Naipauls, the Athol Fugards, the Jean Rhyses and such, the number of very considerable front-runners is still dismayingly – and of course cheerily – great.

Expectably, perhaps, novels preponderate among the candidates. In the third world, evidently, the novel still handily and unashamedly serves as the catch-all it was in Victorian England. As the aptest vehicle for comprehensive explanation and indictment it's the novel that most invites the post-colonial author. And the novel is not at all bashful about again doing its turn as the loose and baggy-trousered monster, pockets stashed with civil wars and emergent con-

sciousnesses, spilling out anti-British accusations, larding the ground as it goes with the problems of modernity and women's plight and military oppression.

Poets are less numerous, but, of course, not unimpressive. Sipho Sepamla's volume *The Blues is You in Me* (published by the courageous Johannesburg firm of Ad. Donker) strikes not just because it remembers Sharpeville so memorably and sings a uniquely South African blues ('the blues is the Group Areas Act and all its jive/the blues is the Bantu Education Act and its improvisations') but because such strong grounds for hatred have not blurred an acute eye for the comedy of love. 'Yes sir I swear some day/I'll quit babies with obvious mileage,' the poet assures us. He'll do it, too, on occasion, in the language of culture-clash: a macaronic or Skeltonic mix of standard English, pidgin and native dialect. In this Sepamla is not unlike Edward Kamu Brathwaite, a still more important and more achieved poet, whose long *Mother Poem*, about his native Barbados, sports a 'protestant pentecostalism', as he calls it, of language. A Babel of tongues: it's the aptest of images, bearing not only on the island's and the poem's multi-layerings of official and unofficial English but on the centrality in Barbados of religious life – again layered, Christianity on spirit-worship, garbled and parodied white religion on submerged black.

Britain massively haunts the Nigerian writers too. Undernourished Biafran children were known, so V. Chukwuemeka Ike's *Sunset at Dawn* informs us, as 'Harold Wilson's children'. (There's even a technical term for Nigerians who've returned from Britain: 'been-to's'.) The case Ike makes is easier than Isidore Okpewho's, whose *The Last Duty* is also about the Biafran War. The war's horrors – and they have in Ike a patient if leisurely chronicler – are put as a kind of absurdity for which outside interests are more blameable than the actual belligerents. That remains an over-simplicity scarcely relieved by Ike's nicely-sprung, and continually delighting, metaphors (in the bedroom a lustful politico 'lost no time in peeling his ripe pawpaw'). Okpewho's narrative is not only more localised but less prone to lay blames. Separations of lovers and deaths of husbands will, in his account, just happen, and in a messy war victims and killers are all Nigerians: a much more tragic view.

Even if only linguistically, though, the continuing theme is the meeting of cultures. 'You Arts Men are all Doubting Thomases,' one of Ike's characters gibes at another. But usually it's more than a case of what to do with the Authorised Version you find on your tongue. There's the modernist novel, for example. Uniquely among these novel-

ists, the Guyanan Wilson Harris seeks to reflect in a modern form the modern world that the people of *Da Silva Da Silva's Cultivated Wilderness & Genesis of the Clowns* are facing up to. In the end, I'm afraid, his flashy *nouveau romancier's* fictionality – Da Silva paints the Commonwealth; 'We live by fictions, Jen'; and so on – retreats altogether too debilitatingly from the real world where it still seeks to lodge its allegations. More straightforward and more customary is the modernity of the mere motor-car: especially in Nkem Nwankwo's most fetching *My Mercedes is Bigger than Yours*. Petrol-guzzlers snarl up the roads of Lagos town but they're the only reliable guarantor of the quick lay and the sure vote to office.

Nwankwo is, like all the writers I've so far mentioned, male. And for all their merits none of these men seems to me as good in fictionalising the prevailing matter of traditions coping with worrying novelties as a trio of superb women novelists: Sheila Smith, Bessie Head and Buchi Emecheta. Each of them endorses the widespread feeling of onslaught, of the breaking of cultures, but they reinforce it sharply by their women's vision. Theirs is not a simply modernising world but one that seeks, come what may, to keep women in traditionally imprisoning holes and corners. It's a world where whites not only force all blacks into an exile apart from humanity but where women are pushed further still into sexist exile. The female point of view, in other words, really does hone the perception, and tightens the presentation of tyranny and colonialism.

Sheila Smith's *He's My Brother* (she is a white South African, and hers is another Ad. Donker publication) most convincingly weaves together the heaviness of the cops who bear down on a white teacher because of her friendship with a black radical who's been to Oxford – the legalised burden of apartheid's old-fashioned suspicions – and the male brutishness of a gang of whites (including her current lover) off on a drunken, and eventually murderous, shooting-trip. It's all a man's world, for which (as for much else) the novel has a keenly, almost Orwellian, smell-obsessed nose. Bessie Head's *The Collector of Treasures* (she's a black South African exiled to Botswana) also puts a woman's as well as a black's

Buchi Emecheta was born of Ibuza parentage in Lagos, Nigeria, in 1944. Despite traditional prejudice against education for girls, she managed to secure a basic schooling for herself and, having followed her student husband to Britain with their two small children, later took her BSc Honours degree in Sociology at London University. Her first book, In the Ditch, began life as a series of articles in the NEW STATESMAN in 1971; it was published as a documentary novel in 1972 and will be reissued this autumn. Her other novels are Second-Class Citizen (1975), The Bride Price (1976) and The Slave Girl (1977) (Allison & Busby). Also due this autumn are a new novel, The Joys of Motherhood, and the first of a series of children's stories, Titch the Cat. Buchi Emecheta has also written plays for television and radio and many articles; she has worked as a librarian, teacher and community worker, and is a member of the advisory committee to the Home Secretary on Race and Equality. She lives with her five children in North London.

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case in tales that both reach back into tribal legend and cut deep into modern Africa. Especially cutting, so to speak, are her stories of single women, stranded with children, particularly the astonishingly gripping and moving story of Dekeledi Mokopi finding love among women in prison, after killing her wayward husband.

Sheila Smith and Bessie Head will both be heard from again. They both deserve prizes. The Jock Campbell award must go, though, by *force majeure*, to Buchi Emecheta, a Nigerian now living and working in London. The cumulative achievement of her *Second-Class Citizen* (1975), *The Bride Price* (1976) and *The Slave Girl* (1977) has commanded my mounting admiration. In narratives of attractively readable simplicity (the sort that requires terrific art to bring off) she has successively charted the efforts of a Nigerian woman and her burgeoning family to survive the bleaknesses of a hostile London, and the problems of love and marriage in present and recently-past Nigeria. With the compelling warmth of an extraordinary capacity for investing her fictional world and her characters – even the grisliest – with deep affection she rebukes whole arrays of hostile forces. London racists, husbands, tribal traditionalists, missionary functionaries: the inhuman is everywhere laid bare. Buchi Emecheta speaks particularly, of course, for educated Nigerian women struggling against their more ignorant menfolk. But she speaks, too, for all women, for all the oppressed.

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 **HMSO BOOKS**

Jeremy Treglown

Drunk Dreams

Topology of a Phantom City ALAIN ROBBE-GRILLET translated by J. A. Underwood
John Calder £5.50

Enemies of the System by BRIAN ALDISS
Cape £3.50

Autumn Manoeuvres by MELVYN BRAGG
Secker & Warburg £4.50

Lumbering along half-a-century behind the visual arts, avant-garde writing is brought as near to fully developed surrealism as it's likely to get by Robbe-Grillet in his latest fiction. It's a mytho-pictorial narrative, describing in different ways a constant group of scenes of sexual violence, putting them (for example) in different periods and at different points on a kind of life-illusion continuum: treating them in one section like a reconstructed archaeological discovery, in another as a myth, in another as a scene in a play, in another as a detective story. The aim, of course, is to reflect the problematic nature of reality: what is the common essence of these varying and varying illusory moments, all of them initially distanced by being presented in a fiction about what is imagined on the brink of sleep?

These are interesting questions, if not very new ones, and Robbe-Grillet's pictorial style is often satisfyingly crisp in J. A. Underwood's translation. Self-explanatory descriptive passages alternate, though, with others that demand interpretation. If you like allegory, and I don't, the balance of methods may please you, though the allegorical scenes are further complicated by their indebtedness to existing works of art. Reading the book is like having a drunken nightmare about the Dada and Surrealism show at the Hayward Gallery. Sinisterly modernised, bleeding classical statuary; images of violation like Ernst's decapitated female torso in *Les Pléiades*; nude women resembling Delvaux's, with their pretentious occult rituals; these and other pictures lunge out of the narrative in ponderous detail, familiar yet grotesque.

Topology of a Phantom City is actually more absorbing to write about than to read. The same is true of some of Beckett's fiction (to which Robbe-Grillet owes a lot, particularly his few badly-needed jokes against his own narrative). Both authors benefit from selective quotation, and both yield up plenty to philosophical and structural analysis; and this seminar-literature, to call it that – a growing body of texts that only really come to life in critical discussion – is arguably the biggest single development in modern writing. The genre's critics understandably see academe as an artificial, exclusive environment for art; but so was the chamber for chamber music, and the seminar may in time prove a similarly dispensable setting.

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POLITICAL IDENTITY W J M Mackenzie 'Almost everything he writes is brilliant, subtle, wide-ranging, thought provoking...' – *New Society* £4.95

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Meanwhile, the need for keen crap-detection in readers of the *nouveau roman* is acute, and I'm not convinced that *Topology of a Phantom City* easily passes the test. In fact, faced with some of its solemn idiocies ('a girl kneeling on a socle, hands behind her back and eyes blindfolded, surrounded by less legible figures and with the word *INSEMINATIO* incised above them'), I'm sure it doesn't.

On now, then, to abuse Brian Aldiss and the Chairman of the Arts Council Literature Panel while I'm about it. *Enemies of the System* has all the easy interest of any cleanly-imagined futurist novel, and effectively juxtaposes its hyper-evolved Biocom tourists with the kangaroo-like, regressed but sporadically dignified human species on the remote planet the tourists visit. Given all this, it's mostly a simple exercise in transposition. Statute-books become computerised statute-banks; fathers are replaced by directors of crèches. All amusing enough, except that the characterisation is rudimentary, the narrative linear, and the dialogue either crudely ideological or absurdly expository: 'Come back, Dulcifer! You stole the gun from me when I was asleep last night, you deviant! I thought Sygiek had retrieved it. Don't shoot!' Good to make sure Dulcifer knows what he's been up to, the rat.

Gauche histrionics of a similar but more sentimental kind are served up at much greater length by Melvyn Bragg in his new novel. It's agonisingly serious stuff about a conscientious Labour politician in Cumbria, the place where he was brought up and can 'feel at peace' (p.27), his neurotic wife Elaine, who feels 'at peace with herself' in Cumbria (p.3), his secretary (and son's ex-girlfriend) Helen, with 'the sense of peace which came to her' in the Cumbrian fells (p.108), and some other less peaceful natives of the area, notably the bumptious media-man son Gareth, who comes to a deservedly crazed end, and Harold, a local Poulson who has a terminal illness, except that he is cured and turns out to be straight as a die – a smack in the teeth for *Private Eye*, which has been after him and which Bragg persistently and not very subtly digs away at.

Most of these characters have such uniformly deep feelings about their geographical past, about pulling themselves together and up by their bootstraps, and about the need to make a fairer Britain, that it can be hard to tell them apart. The novel is so well-meaning, so transparent, so slowly-movingly wide open, that I half-blinded myself trying to give it a fair read, but I nearly gave up when it turned out that Gareth was being blackmailed by the homosexual Peter. This is how Bragg sets up the torrid scene:

Peter's face . . . from slim became vulpine, the features so often referred to as faun-like by old men who thought they knew how to flatter, became vicious . . .

Gareth opened the door, slowly.

'You took your time, didn't you?' Peter said fussily. Then he put forward one leg, rather daintily. 'Well? Do I get in or do I have to pay a forfeit?' Gareth stood aside to let him pass by. As he did so the stench of after-shave almost made him retch.

Warning to any faun-like, aftershave-splashing authors: look to your grants.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Peter Conrad

'Tis Woman's Whole Existence

Tristan und Isolde Covent Garden; further performances 7 and 12 June

Jon Vickers is a great because a reluctant Wagnerian. He objects to the malign casuistry of the music, which justifies incest in *Die Walküre* and adultery in *Tristan und Isolde*. He won't sing *Tannhäuser* at all because, he says, he can't bring himself to blasphemously ask holy Elisabeth to pray for him, and he undertakes *Parsifal* grudgingly, vetoing interpretations like Wieland Wagner's which impiously enthrone the hero as a saviour. The *Tristan* which he is now at last singing at Covent Garden is therefore reticent, meditative and renunciatory, not an enfevered lover but a withdrawn and lucid visionary. It is a *Tristan* acted and sung in brilliant defiance of the work itself. Refusing to rush about with the ardour and impetuosity which the music incites, Vickers stalks and paces in sleep-walking slow-motion, or holds himself menacingly immobile, tensely afraid of surrender to the insinuations of the orchestra. Refusing to emote, he sings with an eerie, mournful softness which restrains and criticises the urgency of the music and the avidity of Isolde. So determined is he to correct the customary false version of the work in which Isolde becomes a blowsy variant of Mme Bovary and *Tristan* the convenient object of her erotic fantasies that in the love-duet his voice belies its own virility in favour of a chilly, abstinent falsetto: Vickers has the audacity to sing a duet which is vulgarly thought to be a musical celebration of sexual union as if he were a castrato.

The *Tristan* of Vickers is confused and disabled by his sexual vulnerability. But the sexual lesion teaches him first shame and then a suicidal wisdom which Isolde cannot share. Traditionally, this has been a work in which the woman consumes the man: the oceanic joy of Isolde in the *Liebtestod* swamps the self-wounding, divisive intellect of *Tristan*. Like a ravenous praying-mantis, Birgit Nilsson once exhausted a trio of *Tristans* in a single performance at the Met. But as Vickers plays it, the roles are reversed: *Tristan* now describes the woman's rampant incomprehension of the suffering, abstracted man. Her *Liebtestod* is not a reconciliation but an insult. She proceeds blithely to consummate a mystical marriage with him, although he has contrived his own death – by offering himself to Melot's sword, by tearing off his bandages – to avoid the catastrophe of reunion with her.

Vocally, this view of the character is communicated by Vickers's extreme dynamic range and by his barbed enunciation of the text. He can plunge in a single utterance of Isolde's name from flinty heroic

rasp to a haunting whisper, and the dynamic imbalance catches the character's disorientation. The metallic violence of the heroic voice is contradicted, even perverted, by the swooning feminine fragility and sweetness with which he uses it. His way with the words is equally revealing. His diction is pointed and exact, defending language against the engulfing inarticulacy of the music. In the love-duet he handles words as delicately as if they were infectious – which they are. Here words are the mind's safeguard against the encroachments of musical instinct; later, in the scene of his delirium, Vickers's crazed fracturing of the text matches the music's disturbing dissolution of tonality.

Dramatically, Vickers communicates his resistance to the sexual importunity of the work by the gentle, distant condescension with which he treats Isolde. They are father and daughter rather than lovers: she snuggles her head on his chest after they drink the potion; he doesn't bound towards her in the garden (as the music urges him to do) but edges forward unfolding paternal arms. Although his partnership with Roberta Knie, the Isolde at Covent Garden, is unequal, it is apt. She plays an ill-tempered, untamed Isolde, with a deranged mane of hair which she tosses like a capitious filly and a harsh, savage voice; Vickers therefore, flinching from physical contact, sets himself to calm and cradle her and gently coaxes her towards renunciation. Her youthful rage of desire is controlled by his tender and protective adult understanding.

Vickers turns the opera away from the celebration of adultery towards the depiction of a biological enmity. As Forster says, commenting on a similar sexual contrariety in *Lohengrin*, the woman loves a man, but the man wants to be free to love mankind. Isolde longs to possess *Tristan*, and resolves to kill him if he won't satisfy her; she exists exclusively for him, but his existence extends into a network of other relationships and responsibilities – he is Marke's nephew and emissary, Melot's rival in chivalry, Kurwenal's master, even the employer of the shepherd who tends his flocks at Kareol – which are compromised by his submission to her. His first exchange with Brangäne states the problem: he can't wait on Isolde in her cabin because he has to pilot the ship. The *Tristan* of Vickers therefore experiences love as humiliation and betrayal. His ecstasy in the duets is an agony of remorse: his agony of Kareol is an ecstasy of purgative self-reproach. Colin Davis, conducting, seems to agree: the orchestra is dolorous not frantic, and the erotic yearning of the prelude and the duet is almost primly repressed.

The Covent Garden production houses

Vickers uneasily. Peter Hall's original version prettified the work, giving it a tapestried pre-Raphaelite look, as if the composer were Elgar or Delius. His production was promptly sabotaged by Birgit Nilsson, who rightly refused to countenance the posthumous clinch prescribed by Hall, which by now has been virtually dismantled. There are no projections to transfigure the dreary backcloth; the tree in the garden no longer retracts its sheltering branches. Elijah Moshinsky has restaged the work with many fine domestic perceptions: Isolde and Brangäne have a nervous girlish intimacy, lolling on the grass or squatting on the floor of their cabin; Brangäne unlocks her medicine-cabinet with proprietorial glee; Kurwenal crouches by Tristan's stretcher in the posture of a Landseer dog. Because Peter Hall's intention was to re-

duce the scale of the emotions, the stage itself has been miniaturised: the ship's deck, the greensward and the courtyard are congested islets on to which the action is uncomfortably huddled. So niggardly is the space that the only possibility for movement is vertical: sailors scale the mast, Brangäne ascends the tower, the shepherd climbs the cliff. Vickers needs more room. He is too stern and granitic to fit Hall's conception of Tristan as a languid Burne-Jones knight with a mossy skirt and trailing flaxen tresses; and he is too intense and hyperbolic to be caged inside Moshinsky's domestic setting: his voice requires the abstract amplitudes of Wieland Wagner's empty Bayreuth stage or Karajan's midnight gloom at Salzburg. Nevertheless, his Tristan is obligatory – a brave and dangerous performance, which renews the work.

lips, throbbing and gasping across the octaves, manage to persuade us that they are warily, defensively, edgily, irritably but authentically in love; and that is what matters most. At all events, they left me hoping I won't have to wait another ten years for my countrymen to uncrate the next Mari-vaux.

Wilson John Haire's trio of playlets isn't, alas, about dinosaurs in cut-off Amazonia. By 'lost worlds' he would seem to mean nothing more antediluvian than peaceful, pleasant lives, the sort too few of his fellow-creatures are able to spend with their wives, husbands, parents and children; and, logically enough, he sets the bulk of the evening on his own home turf, in Ulster. Three over-ripe spinsters fester beside the bed of their senile mother in a farmhouse that is itself marooned somewhere in the wild west of Crossmaglen. A fugitive gunman brings his bride to a wedding reception in a derelict house in no-go Belfast, only to be interrupted by the sound of the British army bashing its way through the wall with sledgehammers. The writing is mournful, as no doubt it should be; it also tends to be cumbersome and a bit florid, too apt to succumb to such archnesses as 'something inside me fell apart like a dying tulip'. Especially in the first play, it always has more avoirdupois than power or momentum.

The second is less affected and better, though it too suffers from a severe want of humour, surprising in an Irish writer. There comes a moment, quite unrecognised by Mr Haire, when his litany of slaughter begins to verge on self-parody. 'Mrs Levine once lived here', 'She was caught in crossfire' . . . 'Had a son called Matthew', 'Booby-trapped car' . . . 'Mario Fuento, awful nice man', 'Machine-gunned from a car three years ago'. Wilson John Haire, very promising writer: drowned in his own verbiage in the summer of '78. But the most miscalculated of these pieces is the third, which is partly a lament for a dispossessed Cambodian girl, partly an attack on the comfortable myopia of the English foster-parents she ends by plugging with a pistol. It is psychologically skimpy, imaginatively thin and all pretty predictable, though, by way of compensation, rather more excitingly acted than either of the other two. Too much is delivered as if through a megaphone from a high platform in a strong breeze. Loss needs to be more intimate.

Bernard Shaw once declared that 'what people call love is impossible except as a joke between two strangers meeting accidentally at an inn or in a forest park', and, not surprisingly, is generally supposed to have left his own marriage unconsummated. His lifelong determination to transform himself into pure mind and will makes him a bit chilling to ordinary mortals; yet it has to be added that he was extraordinarily kind and considerate to his friends. To Lillah McCarthy, for instance, when she was abandoned by her husband, Granville Barker. And, as Don Taylor's play makes clear, to Janet Achurch when drugs and booze began to destroy that remarkable acting talent. He wrote *Candida* for her, as a sort of antidote. He tried to lure her on to a plane of high Ibsenite endeavour, on which he would be Rosmer to her Rebekka. And when she developed typhoid, he announced he would

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Love is Strange

The Inconstant Couple Chichester

Lost Worlds Cottesloe

The Achurch Letters Greenwich

The Charlie Chaplin Show Stratford East

The Inconstant Couple is John Bowen's title for his adaptation of *L'Heureux Stratagème*, which turns out to be the first revival of Marivaux that our laggardly and insular theatre has presented to yours truly (and, by now, yours very protractedly) for favour of review. To be sure, his work seems pretty alien, even when it is decked out in pastiche English – 'you, madam, are the only fatal she to whom my heart is ever bound', and so on, and so on. Our early 18th-century comic playwrights, even those with a reputation for sentimentality, are more peppy, energetic and interested in incident, their characters more crisply defined, more extroverted and far busier. They are like hyped-up beavers beside the sloths of *The Inconstant Couple*, all of whom, even the servants, spend their dramatic lives draping themselves across the landscape and contemplating the two or three liaisons that constitute the be and the all of the plot. Love absorbs them, obsesses them, no less than it does the seared victims of 17th-century tragedy. In subject and style Marivaux is a reincarnation of Racine, only with those once-bared teeth readjusted to form a mellow, rather melancholy smile.

This particular tale is quickly paraphrased. A man and a woman affect an attachment in order to win back the love-objects who have jilted them for each other. That's all there is to it, and all there needs to be, because it is the shift of feelings, not of event, that fascinates Marivaux: the nuances of fickleness, jealousy and love that he really wants to dramatise. What he offers, and offers with a sophistication that makes his English contemporaries look faintly oafish by comparison, is a sense of the intricacy of

emotion. All right, let me come clean and admit that the audience at Chichester seemed puzzled by the play's elegant outlandishness and exasperated by its lack of obvious fun. Nor could I blame it, because Noel Willman's production is altogether too limpidly Watteauesque and decoratively Fragonardish. If it rightly rejects broad effects – allowing, for instance, the lover derided as a 'ridiculous fop' to become nothing more lurid than a fastidious poseur with a china-doll's face – there are also many times when finer timing or more thoughtful phrasing could point up the true humour of the situation. All the same, it would be mean-spirited to labour such complaints. Keith Baxter, flashing vulnerable looks from behind his plastic savoir-faire, and Sian Phil-

Tom Disch

The Constellations

The centuries had already stopped believing the literal truth of such tales when they began to scribble these hyperboles across the sky. Each white fleck received a name (just as, in philosophy, for each effect there was a cause): for instance – Bellatrix, Castor, Pollux, Capella.

One millenium went by, then another. New laws were promulgated, but to no purpose; new names were added to the charts, but the charts faded and one by one the stars – Bellatrix, Castor, Pollux, Capella – regained their anonymity. Who can name them now? Who can tell their stories?

'keep the noxious vapours at bay by sheer intellectual superiority' and stay beside her bed all night, cradling her head. His dealings with her make it a little easier to believe that what he kept beneath his woven ginger waistcoat was actually a heart, not just part of the cerebral sewing-machine that Yeats famously described as smiling and smiling and clicking as it smiled.

Julian Curry is a marvellously imperturbable GBS, poised in some emotional hinterland between flesh and fibreglass; Sara Kestelman, a tense and feeling Janet; and Doreen Mantle, very overwrought as Jenny Patterson, the widow who relieved the over-age Shaw of his virginity and whom he later dramatised in the cruellest and most disagreeable of his plays, *The Philanderer*. The result is, I suppose, of more moment to those already interested in Shaw than to the casual caller; but it unquestionably makes a more absorbing evening than the tribute to Chaplin at Stratford-Atte-Bowe, which is sketchy, hurried, a bit amateurish, and redeemed from disaster only by the off-hand but expressive efforts of Ken Robertson, who simulates the tiny, twitching tramp with wit and accuracy.

Sport

Russell Davies

Winning

We have arrived at an awful time of the year for people who dislike sport, and I don't want to make it any worse for them. But even if I did, I could scarcely compete with ITV, who since the weekend have been announcing every programme (e.g., a re-run of the James Bond film *Thunderball*) as 'a plus' to the World Cup. Indeed, the ITV build-up as a whole has offered some spectacularly bad moments, many of them clustering in the diabolical ad they have been running for their World Cup Information Pack. This length of ghastly video easily outparodies Benny Hill, what with Brian Moore's desperate impersonation of a shorn Laughing Cavalier, and the urgently faked forcefulness and wooden gestures of Kevin Keegan. Nobody as well-liked as Keegan should be made to supercharge his own natural earnestness in this way (though nobody as sensible as Keegan should let himself in for such embarrassing exploitation, however profitable).

I rather dread the World Cup myself, not because I am fed up with football, but because I am not sure how much football is going to be played. Much the most fortunate feature of the first-round programming is that it leaves the Italy v. Argentina game – for which even viewers are advised to wear shinpads – until 10 June, by which time some 16 matches less vulnerable to bouts of Stone Age brutality (and *Commedia dell'Arte* stage-falls) will already have been played. Not that Scotland-Peru is likely to be a gentle game either,

especially if the Scots play with their customary wild streaky recklessness in the first ten minutes.

In what I saw of the Home Internationals (I missed Scotland-England through injury), Scotland seemed to have contracted the Welsh disease, which manifests itself in the ability to play well for long periods without ever looking like scoring. An opening goal against Wales themselves should have cured this for the Scots, but they never again had a grip on the game, and in fact should have lost it. Donachie's disastrous own goal was of course a great gift to Wales; but then Scotland's opponents had missed a penalty (why give it to the little man Flynn, who has to work that much harder to deceive?), and McQueen had needed to crock himself against a goal-post to keep an earlier Welsh effort out.

This was a bad moment for the shape of Scotland's plans, but quite heartening from the point of view of morale: far better to go into a competition with a slightly depleted but thoroughly competitive side than with a team in the habit of self-preservation, like the Hungarians England were able to expose with old-fashioned high-ball tactics. I can understand the average Hungarian's desire to spend a few weeks as far away from Hungary as possible; but really, in that Wembley game, only the Currie goal (scored from the very position and circumstances in which John Wark twice hit the post in the Cup Final) should really have stood much chance of taking a well-prepared World Cup defence by surprise.

I would expect, as most people seem to do, that Scotland's full-backs, or shortage of them, will be their undoing sooner or later. It has not taken much to undo Donachie this season, as he very frankly admitted when the TV show *Nationwide* bade its end-of-term farewells to its adopted team, Manchester City; and though Donachie will not blunder again as preposterously as he did against Wales, his estimation of his own judgment cannot now hope to be at its highest. But on neither side of defence is Scotland secure against wing attack, and I can't help thinking that George Burley of Ipswich would have been an even wiser inclusion in the Scottish party than the much-lamented Andy Gray.

In other sports, the young men of England have been 'coming through'. I have spent a good part of a chair-bound convalescence marvelling caustically at the full range of cock-ups that a courseful of British professional golfers can devise; and I find it mildly astonishing that golf-correspondents can concentrate so blithely on the winning performance of Nicholas Faldo in the Colgate PGA, while dozens of his senior compatriots, who should have been giving him some competition, were hacking deplorably about in the Southport scrub, bringing in scores that comfortably topped even the best of the Bank Holiday temperatures. This sort of thing seems never to happen in America. Certainly they have the odd freak winner over there – every so often, some pink-trousered provincial called Buddy Plodkins comes charging up through the field – but there's always a whole gang of famous names right behind him, reminding

him that it won't happen again unless he acquires consistency.

Faldo, at any rate, could not have had a more relaxing introduction to the ways of tournament-winning; and the same ought to be true (by now) of David Gower's current first appearance in the England cricket team. He is not facing the greatest attack in the world – in any case, he has already mastered what there is of it – and ought to be able to ease himself into the prestige pages of Wisden without discomfort. Gower first captured the nation's attention, if I am a representative citizen, in a John Player game at the end of last season, and just as much on account of his appearance as of his batting. He had been recently hit on the head somehow or other, and both his eye-sockets had turned deep purple. He looked like the ghost of a panda, which made the apparent sloth of his attacking shots all the more striking. His performance in the Prudential games indicated that he is perhaps not yet quite prudential enough: he does swish rather sleepily outside the off-stump when he first gets in, and he can be tempted into thrashy off-drives that end up in the air. But with ordinary luck he should survive these weaknesses long enough to get going. He certainly does things smoothly enough to enrage good bowlers profitably.

Television

Julian Barnes

All in the Family

Do you have those days when you think every identikit drawing on *Police Five* is of you? And is it hubris or paranoia? For once, this week, there was a simpler explanation: the prevalence of so much sinisterly attractive crime during the BBC's Bank Holiday Mafia weekend. Recruiting figures in shady trattorie presumably leaped after Gaia Servadio's *Inside Story* (BBC-2 Friday) and Francis Ford Coppola's *The Godfather* (BBC-1 Sunday, Monday). Not that Miss Servadio was out to glamorise the Mafia and their running of the Sicilian town of Alcamo; far from it. If anything, she was trying to daub up one of those simple wall-slogans: Christian Democrats = Mafia. She assembled convincing facts about why Mafia rule was so appalling: 900 murders since the war in a town of 45,000; massive abuse of planning permissions; and bizarre economic effects (the Mafia for some reason bombed all the local fish shoals, so the town now imports frozen fish from Africa, douses it in salt water, and sells it as fresh). But she also had understandable difficulty in finding people who would talk about it – in the right way, that is. The mayor would talk: he said there was no mafia any more. The mafia lawyer would

talk: he said the boys 'come to me because they trust my correctness, my denunciation of abuses'. The judge would talk: he said, 'mafia is a way of living - it's not a true structure'. With Miss Servadio unable to tie names to deeds, they were allowed to make it all sound like a picturesque Rotary Club.

And what about ordinary people? The gunsmith, smiling cheerfully (business is good) and caressing a squat shotgun cartridge, would talk: 'these are also used for shooting people'. And a fisherman would talk, to Miss Servadio's surprise (though not to ours after hearing what he said): 'Mafia's always defended the poor; because if you haven't any coins, what can they take?' One of the things they take, of course, is what you might have had if they hadn't existed: in the fisherman's case, fresh fish in the sea for a start. Not for the first time, fiction, in the shape of Coppola's *The Godfather*, told more truth: about motivation and methods, about the mix of honour and viciousness, sentimentality and ruthlessness. No wonder the mob wouldn't allow the word 'Mafia' to be used at any point in the film.

Some heavy up at BBC-2 has apparently made Brian Redhead an offer he couldn't refuse; and his series on the press, *Don't Quote Me*, has been killed. A pity, since, with troubled newspapers reluctant to publicise their own problems, we needed to have a good regular programme about Fleet Street running: something like *The Editors*, for instance. Redhead isn't in the Hardcastle league, but his useful show contained some spirited exchanges and offered some useful lessons. One, don't overcrowd the studio. Two, don't overcrowd the studio with Peregrine Worsthorne, a man capable only of handing down five-minute paragraphs of whimsical tangentiality. Three, include people who neither like nor particularly trust the papers they read. The last programme, on the state of art criticism, had John Hoyland telling Richard Cork he was 'completely out of his depth'; and the liveliest row of all took place between historian Ian Linden and *Daily Telegraph* editor William Deedes, about Rhodesia. Linden, to Deedes's evident surprise, had actually read all of his newspaper's coverage of the war, and was eager to identify and contest its sources (mostly, it seems, official Salisbury communiqués). Deedes's face was like something from a Bateman cartoon: he was meeting The Man Who Remembered Last Week's Newspaper.

The main problem in shows about the press - and one not alleviated in *Don't Quote Me*'s case by Redhead's chubby affability - is the ease with which discussions slide away from the Street's handling of an issue to simple discussion of the issue itself. Unless restrained, journalists (especially those who appear on television) are apt to go barking off into punditry. Watching them try to stick to a narrow discussion of the morals and methods of their own profession is like watching *It's a Knockout* contestants in high heels trying to hop along a greased pole with a pumpkin under each arm.

Meanwhile, *What the Papers Say* (Granada), mostly avoiding punditry (except when George Gale is on), continues on its reliable

way, rarely bad, but rarely as pungent and unpredictable as it once seemed to be. In the week of the McKinney revelations it was hosted by Richard Ingrams, with all the professional, jowly charm you'd expect; for once, the doubts you were left with were less about the show than about Ingrams himself. He began by announcing how frightfully boring the McKinney affair was, and how glad he was she'd skipped bail as it meant we'd be hearing less about her. He then devoted half his show to the 'errant strumpet', the 'barrage of smut' about her in the papers, the 'filth' and the 'pornographic' photos. After that, he retailed a long saga of penile frostbite drawn from a foreign medical journal (does he have his own sources, or are *WTPS* researchers ordered to scout for 'smut'?) and took a quick laugh at 'someone called' Peter Redgrove for his views on menstruation. Ingrams's stance, of course, is one of ironic amusement at the follies of the world; but if he didn't keep telling you this was his stance, with many a merry twinkle of those eyes, would you be able to tell it from good old *News of the Screws* prurience? Is Ingrams seriously obsessed by Fleet Street's obsession with sex, or is he simply obsessed by sex? Is he a modern Brutus's wife - or does he secretly want to pull her?

Films

John Coleman

Crying Out Loud

The Shout (AA) Warner West End 2
Coming Home (X) Leicester Square Theatre
Harlan County USA (A) Scala

When it arrives - and, by some minor miracle of audiophones, it does - the throaty clamour indicated by the title of Jerzy Skolimowski's latest excursion into English-speaking cinema is unlike most promises: quite up to expectations, one hell of a howl. Thus giving away the biggest, single effect in *The Shout*, I have made a choice which clearly reflects on the film as a whole: as a whole, it is a hole. Taken at what remove I know not (maybe it would have cast a little light on to a shadowy, sub-Hitchcockian affair to have read the story by the eminent Robert Graves it credits its writers, Skolimowski and Michael Austin, with drawing on) from a source of general

Derek Mahon

The Return

for John Hewitt

I am saying goodbye to the trees,
The beech, the cedar, the elm,
The mild woods of these parts
Misted with car exhaust,
And sawdust, and the last
Gasps of the poisoned nymphs.

I have watched girls walking
And children playing under
Lilac and rhododendron,
And me flicking my ash
Into the rose bushes
As if I owned the place;

As if the trees responded
To my ignorant admiration
Before dawn when the branches
Glitter at first light,
Or later on when the finches
Disappear for the night;

And often thought if I lived
Long enough in this house
I would turn into a tree
Like somebody in Ovid
- A small tree certainly
But a tree nonetheless -

Perhaps befriend the oak,
The chestnut and the yew,
Become a home for birds,
A shelter for the nymphs,
And gaze out over the downs
As if I belonged here too.

But where I am going the trees
Are few and far between.
No richly forested slopes,
Not for a long time,
And few winking woodlands;
There are no nymphs to be seen.

Out there you would look in vain
For a rose bush; but find,
Rooted in stony ground,
A last stubborn growth
Battered by constant rain
And twisted by the sea-wind

With nothing to recommend it
But its harsh tenacity
Between the blinding windows
And the forests of the sea,
As if its very existence
Were a reason to continue.

Crone, crow, scarecrow,
Its worn fingers scrabbling
At a torn sky, it stands
On the edge of everything
Like a burnt-out angel
Raising petitionary hands.

Grotesque by day, at twilight
An almost tragic figure
Of anguish and despair,
It merges into the funeral
Cloud-continuum of night
As if it belongs there.

Lingfield, Surrey -
Coleraine, Co. Derry, 1977

repute, it comes out as about the craziest cinematic structure in a fair while. Skolimowski – too long absent from our screens – is an expatriate Pole of enormous talent, mostly leaning into the surreal. Whether he has genius is something else and this self-inflating doubt seems to beset even his better movies. One thinks especially of the anglicised side of his career and, accordingly, of *Deep End*, where he gave us a sly, merry and murky tale of kinds of life blossoming around a public baths in some echoing appearance of an East End, tiled and chlorinated remnant of Victoriana (it is entirely typical of this instinctive creator that I seem to recall he shot this in Munich). It was *his* London, though, and his slant on it that had it undergoing – if not a sea-change – at least a pristine glimpse through bath-water. It was us rinsed into freshness, as well as a terminal bloodiness.

The Shout lies closer to Altman and stars the unduly enigmatic Susannah York as a lady always ready to go out of her head. She is very good at this and John Hurt, her avant-garde composer-husband, with a boring laboratory calculated to maximise such sounds as balls bearing, cigarettes crackling, trapped insects buzzing in the pursuit of doing his thing, does his other thing also very well, which is to show hurt. Beyond reason, a point we may comfortably have approached already, a scruffy-looking Alan Bates materialises in this couple's North Devon village and speedily gets it across that he lived for 18 years among the aborigines of Australia, married an abo lady and acquired dreadful magic: that shout. It is not only lethal but apparently aphrodisiac: see Miss York's shameless behaviour. Much more amusement, in the indecipherable event, is provided by a very in-and-out context or set of flashes-forward. A cricket match is in progress at a loonie bin and Mr

Bates, as a scorer, confides his wild material to a doctor, set down in the score-box. Flames, and a screaming Francis Bacon-derived yowl (previously salted in), conclude the revel. A quantity of the detail is extremely attractive and special.

Hal Ashby is a director one is inclined, on his past record, to admire. That does not mean one should lie prone at his slightest effort. *Coming Home*, another in that threatened procession (pious candles aglow) of movies about what a stinking war that Vietnam operation was, is brave in a very small way: way after the event. It has a brilliant roll-call of movie veterans, people recognised while the hostilities were happening for standing up and being counted. It has Haskell Wexler, a lighting cameraman of status (increased by his emergence as a director with *Medium Cool*, the only campus-protest picture I can recall with any affection); it has Mr Ashby; it has thespians like Jane Fonda, Jon Voight and Bruce Dern. The screenplay is by Waldo Salt and Robert C. Jones and has more than its ration of trenchancies. For the most parts – which are those of Miss Fonda and Messrs Voight and Dern – it is superbly acted. I never thought to sit through so many clichés under the fleeting impression they were home-truths, even – God help me – aphorisms.

How, then, with so much ostensibly going for it, should it fail – fail to convince, fail to hit one where it is assumed to hurt, fail (if you will) radically? This is a false conundrum I seem to have resolved in setting it. There is Miss Fonda, under highly unexpected hair, the loyal all-American wife, as deep a dish as mom's apple-pie, seeing her man (Mr Dern) off to the combat. During the time that then begins to hang heavily on her mind, sensed as capable of development, she takes on a nurse-sympathiser job in a vastly chic-appearing hospital for the 'Nam maimed, so encountering Mr Voight, a bearded beauty in a wheelchair and eventually in her bed. To ask if you begin to get the picture may sound facile, but it isn't really, is it? You have been here or hereabouts via a thousand hours misspent watching that small box. TV has grown – if that is the operative word – so quickly, harshly and smoothly into dealing with genuine dilemmas, has learnt to make fast, breezy fictions out of slow, nasty facts, that one hardly knows not where to look but *how* to look any more. Or listen.

A strong plug for something completely different, therefore. And best wishes to the Scala, ill-fated as the Other Cinema. Barbara Kopple's *Harlan County USA* took my eye at last year's London Film Festival: it co-opted my ear, too. It is the Scala's opening gambit and it is a documentary – moving with extraordinary bravery and finesse – round a miners' strike in Kentucky. It is as loaded as a shotgun with political pellets and many of them are delivered by the men's womenfolk. To witness a burly lady, an axe-profiled wife, and their initially more reluctant sisters go into action is something indeed. My worry, the old one, stems from the participants' knowledge of a present camera team. But that may properly seem like an aesthetic quibble. After all, they swerved a little history, thereby making some, and that can't be bad.

Weekend Competition

No 2517

Set by Victoria Plumb

As a change from our series of poetic updating, try a prose revision: any scene from Dickens as rewritten by one of the following: Nabokov, Kingsley Amis or Norman Mailer. 150 words max; by 16 June.

Result of No 2514 Set by E. O. Parrott

We asked for 12 lines of fully rhymed verse, with each line containing the title of a well-known post-war novel.

Report

by Fat Jeff

Now, the question of Dan Drough. You may have noticed his wheedling intrusions into the Comp in recent weeks, and the facile versatility with which he switched from Setter to Reporter. Don't imagine that we regulars have failed to note his parvenu habits. We have noted, kept counsel, bided our time and finally struck. Drough judged the four-letter-word comp a fortnight ago, and awarded five quid to an entry from Wayne Sidesaddle, whose very first line contained a word of five letters. If there's one thing that the Chief Cashier of the Complex – the *éminence grise* as we affectionately call him – won't stand, it's the ostentatious squandering of Complex funds. Drough will never write in Fleet Street again: of that, I can assure you. Eight smacking Newtons to the fiendish Corleone; a consoling Wellington the pack.

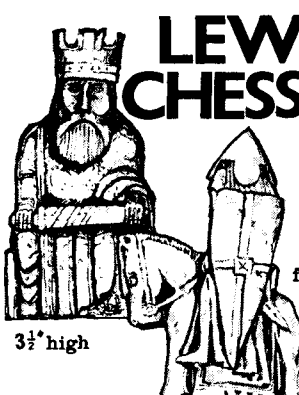
*A Nun official rose
And said in a soft burr:
'As far as letting goes
There's nothing clearer,
The room at the top is full,
Like 19, 84
(That couple's; they have pull) . . .
Ah, catch 22 before
The master's back; I'll say
I want it. Now, just sign
The first. Circle 'OK'.
Five pounds a day. That's fine.*

V. F. CORLEONE

*The affair – and then the end of the affair;
A kind of loving first – the millstone after.
How the comedians must laugh up there,
The masters of our fate who live by laughter!
Scenes from provincial life from them evoke
A certain smile for that uncertain feeling:
Aren't Anglo-Saxon attitudes a joke?
Sure, one fat Englishman is unappealing,
His troubles like a burr on Fortune's coat
Or the sandcastle that the cruel sea
Swallows as if by magic . . . others, note
That staying on means ending up like me.*

MARY HOLTBY

*At Casanova's Chinese Restaurant they've got
to sell
And Molly's fixed a buyer's market for her
cliente.
She's sorted for the kindly ones her armchairs
blue and gold
And, hearing secret harmonies, her records
brash and bold.
Her guests were temporary, Kingsmen,
guardsmen (gown and plume)
But swords meant more to her than books do.
Furnish a room
With culture for the military? Philosophers
can cuddle*



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But question the acceptance world and so get
in a muddle.
It's all a question of upbringing: soldiers like
their ease
While, comfort-lapped at Lady Molly's dons
are hard to please.
The donnish thrust, the soldier's art, will fade
at Molly's sale:
The divan with the valley, of bones will tell
its tale.

LAURENCE FOWLER

What a life at the top for the greedy MP
Who plans, in cold blood, to get trips
which are free.
Rolls Royce to the airport; first class
seat to LA
And breakfast at Tiffany's with
Ambassador Jay.
Our man in Havana may be worth a call.
'Cuban lunch with the Dr?' No trouble at all.
Those invites from Russia - with love and
with visa.
Weekends east of Eden; night flights
in from Pisa.
In lands virgin soldiers pretend to have mined,
Our men at arms labour while the MP
is wined.
But to those really lucky, Jim gives the FO
So that 'vets' might fly freely wherever they go.

ERIC MCPHERSON

The plane climbs; that uncertain feeling
Grips me by the throat. Fear of flying
Sends the tin drum reeling
Like a clockwork orange, gravity-defying.
'Fine, thanks', I lie, to the girl with
green eyes
Who flits to the room at the top of
the aisle
Where the pilot sits - the human factor
that lies
Between me and you and a certain smile.
The riders in the chariot with me doze
Courtesy of Boeing; under the net of sleep
Saturday Night and Sunday Morning close
Around us; where eagles dare, we
sprawl, a snoring heap.

JIM ANTHONY

I've seen this sort of comp before: Success -
They're bound to mention that - and
Lucky Jim -
The creeps! Then Ada to suggest finesse,
A Severed Head to prove they're far from dim;

And then some vulgar stuff like *Doctor No*
Or *Jaws*, to boast about their lack of taste:
'The Carpetbaggers' - loved it, don't you know?
The Stud - a book in which the facts
are faced.
Et puis *La Peste* - en Français - but how else?
Il Gattopardo - one to test S. Keats,
The Group - to please our liberated gels -
The Prize? Six Newtons - bound for
bloody cheats!

TIM HOPKINS



Tony Miles Chess

No 85

Las Palmas 1

The seventh annual Las Palmas tournament was this year held as part of the celebrations of the 500th anniversary of the founding of the city. A strong field of 11 GMs included Larsen, Olafsson, Sax and Csom, Tukmakov, Michael Stean and myself.

Stean and I both held the lead in the early stages, but fell back as Tukmakov took over. The Russian was heading the field up till the last round. At that point he had 10½ points, ahead of Olafsson 10 and Sax 9½. The last round pairings were Sax v. Tukmakov, Larsen v. Olafsson. Tukmakov sacrificed a pawn in the opening, for some initiative, but Sax acquired a second soon after. Gradually the compensation vanished and the Russian suffered his only defeat. This left Olafsson with a chance of outright first place if he could beat Larsen, but the Dane was in destructive mood and after some complications came out on top. Sax and Tukmakov were left to share first place with the Hungarian receiving the trophy of the Minister of Culture by virtue of his better Sonnenborn-Berger.

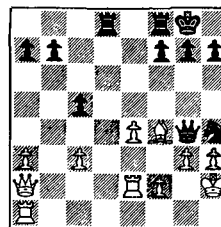
Stean and I shared fourth place on 9½, though we both might have hoped to do better. Michael missed an immediate forced win against Larsen and went on to lose. I blundered on move 40 in a winning position v. the Peruvian Rodriguez, virtually forcing him to play a decisive combination which even gained him a share of the best game prize. The other

half of the best game prize went to Stean's fine win against Sax.

White: M. Stean

Black: G. Sax

1. P-K4, P-QB4; 2. N-KB3, N-QB3; 3. P-Q4, PxP; 4. NxP, N-B3; 5. N-QB3, P-K4; Perhaps an unfortunate choice since Stean has spent a long time analysing the Sveshnikov variation with Korchnoy during his match with Spassky. 6. N(Q4)-N5, P-Q3; 7. B-N5, P-QR3; 8. N-R3, P-N4; 9. BxN, PxR; 10. N-Q5, P-B4; 11. B-Q3, B-K3; 12. Q-R5, B-N2; 13. O-O, P-B5; 14. P-B4. This was supposed to be an innovation, but Sax had apparently seen it before and replied instantly. However, the move is logical. Black wants to continue with O-O, P-B4 and BxN when, after PxR he will have a dangerously mobile central pawn mass. Now White will be able to recapture on Q5 with the QBP or Bishop and frustrate this plan. 14. . . PxP. As I said in the last note Sax played this move instantly, but it seems dubious to me since White's Bishop now becomes a very good piece. 15. BxP, O-O; 16. QR-B1, QR-N1! Black's position is already difficult and the text, preparing a rather irrelevant pawn snatch, does not help. For better or for worse Black must play for . . . P-B4 to create play on the K-side. Maybe 16. . . N-Q5; 17. N-B2, NxN; 18. RxN, P-B4. 17. P-QN3, BxN? On general principles alone, such a course is doomed to fail. White gets a dominant Bishop on Q5, his Knight comes into play on QB4 and he has two fine lines for his Rooks. For his part Black gets just the QR-pawn. 18. BxR, N-N5; 19. KR-Q1, NxP; 20. R-B6! (Threatening RxQP.) R-N3; 21. RxR, QxR; 22. N-B4, Q-B2; Alternatively 22. . . Q-N5; 23. NxQP, N-B6; 24. BxPch, K-R1; 25. B-N6, P-R3; 26. N-B7ch, RxN; 27. BxR, NxR; 28. QxN with an easy win, due to Black's wrecked K-side and (still!) bad Bishop. 23. NxQP, N-B6; 24. N-B5! The decisive zwischenzug! The threat of Q-N5 ends Black's resistance. 24. . . K-R1; 25. R-Q3, NxR (Otherwise R-R3) 26. RxN, P-B3; 27. P-KR3, R-KN1; 28. Q-Q1. 1 - 0 (There is no answer to R-Q7. If 28. . . B-B1; 29. R-Q7, Q-N3; 30. RxPch, KxR; 31. Q-R5ch mates.)



Problem 85

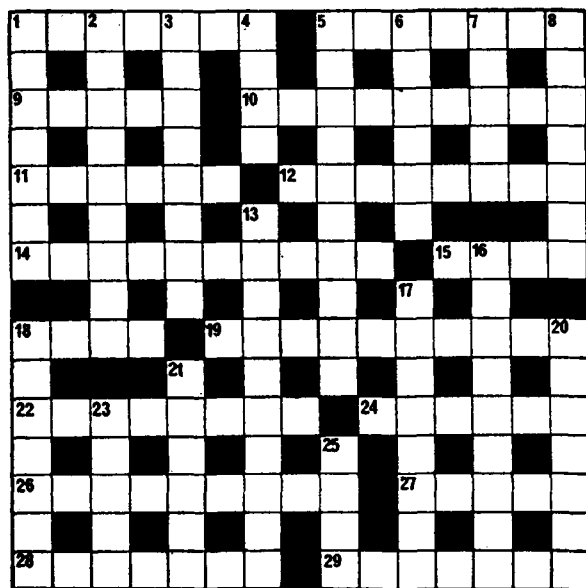
Another special prize, for the most spectacular combination, went to Fridrik Olafsson for his play from the diagram position. Black to play - how did the game finish? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 14 June.

Solution to Problem 83

White won by: 1. RxP, B-B3 (if BxR; 2. Q-Q7ch, K-N1 or B-N2, N-Q6; 3. QxB, B-Q5; 4. N-B5!) 2. R-Q7ch! K-N1 (or BxR; 3. QxBch, K-N1; 4. NxR) 3. Q-N3ch, B-N4; 4. N-Q6, R-B2; 5. R-Q8ch Resigns.

Weekend Crossword 1264

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1264, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7JH, by first post 13 June.



ACROSS

- Defame one who goes down if a point is lost (7).
- The police disappear, carrying the tapes that have been tampered with (7).
- Supports the players (5).
- The clever with words conduct cases (9).
- 'Blot out, correct, —, refine' (Swift) (6).
- Scraps in which there is one favourite among the certainties (8).
- Where our scarlet is used (5, 5).
- Inch which may cover a large area (4).
- Composer of a musical a long way from home (4).
- To cause a shock examine corrupt ideals (10).
- Wood carries everyone back in breakdown (8).
- Hill and river somewhere in Scotland (6).
- One of these ring experts has to study gold (5).
- Something sweet from the music in Grieg's piano concerto (5).

- When one's diet may change (7).
- When viewed the digs were untidy (7).

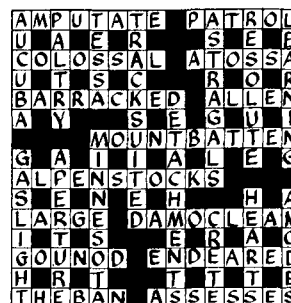
DOWN

- In the shade of a tree it is heavenly (7).
- '— voices prophesying war' (Coleridge) (9).
- Misery caused when the rest run wild in town (8).
- Fight back with short sharp blows (4).
- Worn down and split in payment (10).
- Tries to clean those who are very dirty (6).
- Rating with or without custom (5).
- Supervise a piece of writing in Old English (7).
- Criterion for clown (10).
- Turn and float in spray (9).
- Providing fertility in the male with a universal sign of wedlock (8).
- Was in front carrying wrong coat when found (7).

- Appeared as master in opposite of what he has (7).
- Where one is separated from mother by legislation (6).
- Lamb inexperienced about reading and writing? (5).
- Doctrines which all end the same way (4).

SET SQUARE

Solution to No 1263



Prizewinners to No 1263

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ALMOST FREE. 485 6224. 'Distant Encounters' by Brian W. Aldiss. Tues.-Sats. 1.15 p.m., Sun. 3 & 5 p.m. No show Mons.

CHICHESTER. 0243 81312. June 2, 6, 9 & 10 at 7 p.m. June 3 & 8 at 2 p.m. 'The Inconstant Couple'. June 3, 5, 7 & 8 at 7 p.m. June 10 at 2 p.m. 'A Woman Of No Importance'.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE 722 9301. Georgina Hale, Susan Hampshire, Richard Moore, Peter Woodthorpe in 'The Tribades' by Per Olof Enquist. Mon.-Fri. 8 p.m. Sats. 5 & 8 p.m. 'A fascinating play'. Guardian, 'Crackles with sexual battle. Electrifying Times'. A very fascinating play 'Daily Telegraph'.

NATIONAL THEATRE 928 2252. 'Macbeth', 'Plunder', 'Plenty', 'Lost Worlds', 'Don Juan comes back from the War'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

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Meetings

RACISM IN EDUCATION. 6 June from 1.30 p.m. Afternoon and evening workshops and films at Institute of Education, Bedford Way, WC1. Free. For more details contact SU 636 1912.

UJAMAA VILLAGES (rural development in Tanzania), first hand critical view by an Oxfam Field Director, who has worked there for several years. Tues. 6 June 6.30 p.m. Africa Centre, 38 King St, Covent Garden, WC2.

'MAY DAY 1978' Report from delegate to Albania's celebrations. Conway Small Hall, Red Lion Sq., Holborn. 7.30 p.m. Friday 9 June.

ADLERIAN SOCIETY. 'The Tyranny of Concepts', I. D. Shamah. Tuesday 6 June 7.30 p.m. Mary Sumner Hall, 24 Tufston St, SW1. Visitors welcome 50p (students 25p). Weekend School 8-10 Sept., St Hilda's College, Oxford. 'Adlerians Face Society in Change' — details at above lecture or from Mrs H. Kaye (ASWE 78), Little Friars, Brockenhurst Road, Ascot, Berks.

DID JESUS DIE UPON THE CROSS? An international conference of archaeologists, scholars and theologians at the Commonwealth Institute, Kensington, London on June 2, 3 & 4. Admission free but by ticket only from London Mosque, 16 Gressenhall Road, London, SW18.

SHAW SOCIETY Friday 9 June, Conway Hall, WC1. Coffee 6.30 p.m., AGM 7.15 p.m. and Shavian Quiz.

THREE FILMS ON FUEL ENERGY, plus discussion. The London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, W8. Sun. 4 June 7.30 p.m. Adm. free.

LABOUR CHALLENGE — hear two prominent speakers at Poale Zion Conference Sun. 4 June 2-5 p.m. Hillel House, 1 Endsleigh St, WC1. Yigal Allom, former Israeli Foreign Minister & Ron Hayward, Gen. Sec. Labour Party. Apply for tickets: P. Gourgey, Hon. Sec. 586 4433 or at door 50p.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE at 23 Norfolk Sq., W2. Sun. 4 June. Swami Tripurankanda on 'The Wisdom of Yajnavalkya' 5 p.m. All welc. Vedanta mag. 50p.

THEOSOPHY. Simple talks for inquirers. Sun. 4 June 8 p.m. 'Death and Rebirth'. S.A.E. free pamphlet, programme, book list. 5.2, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

Public Meetings in June

BEDFORD. Tues. 6 June, Bishop Colin WINTER and Colin SAUNDERS (Labour PPC for Isle of Ely) on The Church and Human Rights, at The Library, Harpur Street, 7.30 p.m.

LONDON. Tues. 13 June, Rev Paul FLOWERS on Christian Socialists and the Middle East, at Kingsway Hall, Kingsway WC2, at 8 p.m.

BRADFORD. Mon. 26 June, Lord SOPER, Rev David MASON (PPC for Reading North) and Rev Michael WEDGEWORTH on Christianity and Socialism, at Methodist Church, Haworth Road at 7.30 p.m.

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DUNDEE Wednesday June 7, 7 p.m. Tay Hotel, White Hall Crescent. Introduced by Roy Battersby (WRP Central Committee).

SUNDERLAND Thursday June 8, 7 p.m. Library Lecture Theatre, Sunderland Polytechnic, Chester Road. Introduced by Roger Smith (WRP Central Committee).

CARDIFF Friday June 9, 7 p.m. Royal Hotel, St Mary Street. Introduced by Mike Banda (WRP General Secretary).

DERBY Sunday June 11, 6 p.m. Derby Playhouse. Introduced by Roy Battersby (WRP Central Committee).

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